CARTOONIST PROfiles

Prince Valiant
IN THE DAYS OF KING ARTHUR
BY HAROLD R FOSTER
Synopsis : PRINCE VALIANT STEPS BACK FROM THE BREACH AND BLACK ROBERT LOOKS BEYOND HIS SON INTO THE FACE OF THE MAN HE HATES. RUY FOULKE GLARES PAST HIS LITTLE DAUGHTER AT HIS PROUD ENEMY. THE HORRID DIN OF BATTLE DIES AWAY AS THE TWO LEADERS FALTER. THEN VAL'S CLEAR VOICE RINGS OUT: "WELL," HE CRIES, "SHALL WE CONTINUE THE FIGHT AND SACRIFICE THESE TWO YOUNGSTERS TO YOUR HATE AND PRIDE ?"

In this issue is a very recent interview with HAL (PRINCE VALIANT) FOSTER plus some of the key pages he has done over the years. Also included is a surprising MILTON (STEVE CANYON) CANIFF feature which developed just a short time before we went to press.

Issue No. 22 June 1974

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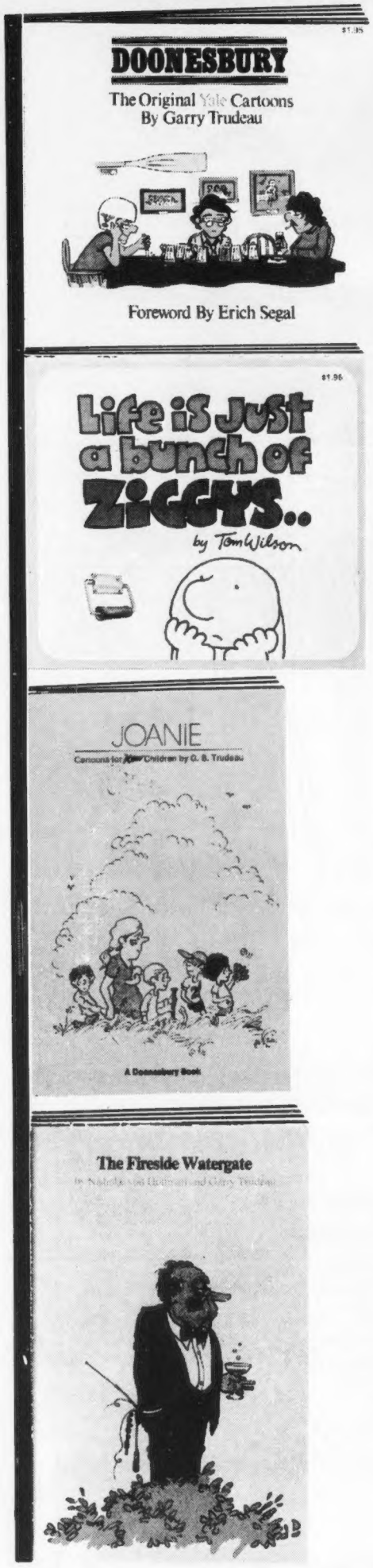

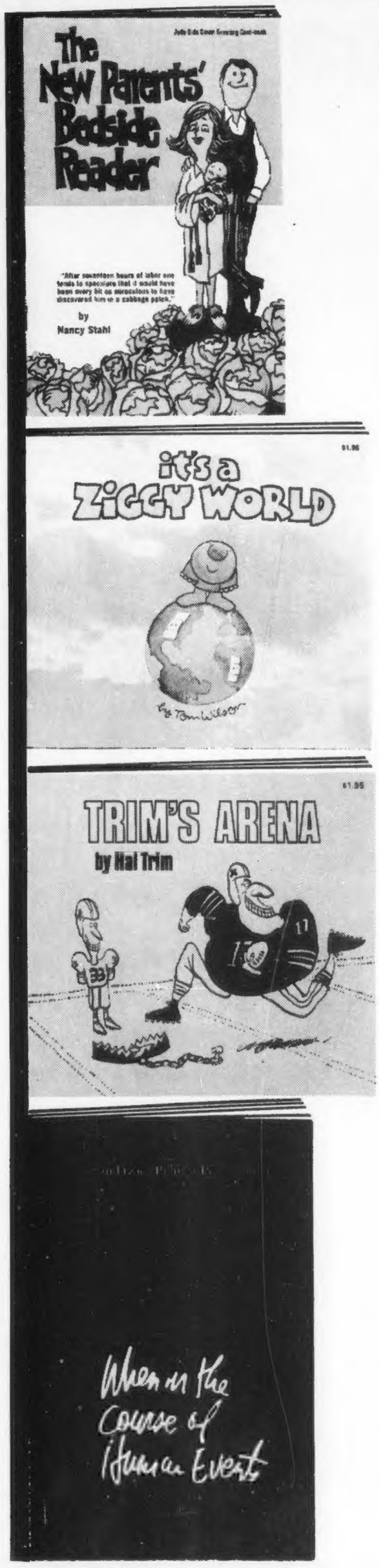

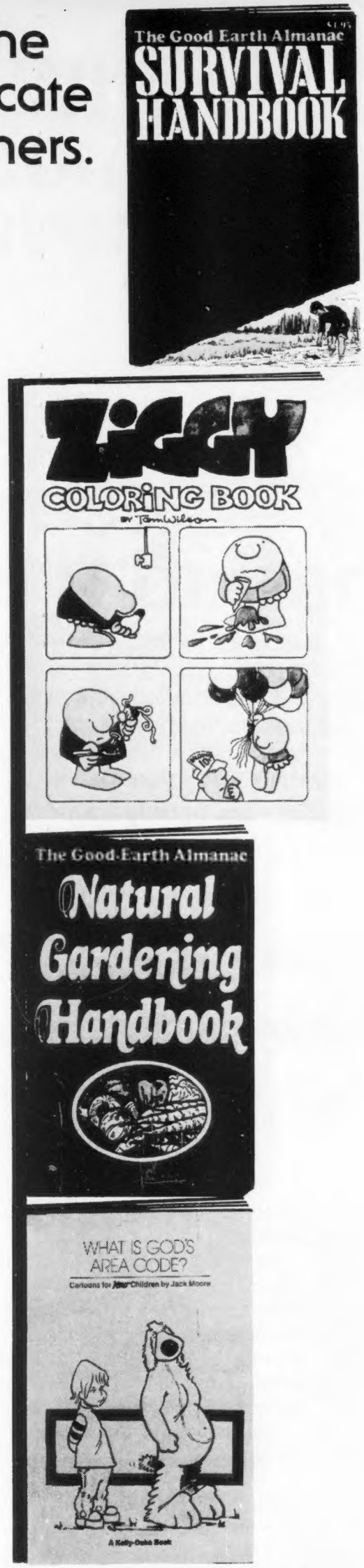

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Vol. 1 No. 22 June 1974

Editorial Cartoonist	6
Funky Winkerbean	12
Marvel Comics Artist	18
Milton Caniff	24
Ronald Searle	32
Cartoonists Crossword	34
Trim's Arena	36
Phil Love	42
George Herriman	43
Hal Foster	44
TV Cartooonist	54
Said & Dunn	60
Art Director-Expo '74	62
Comics Editor	66

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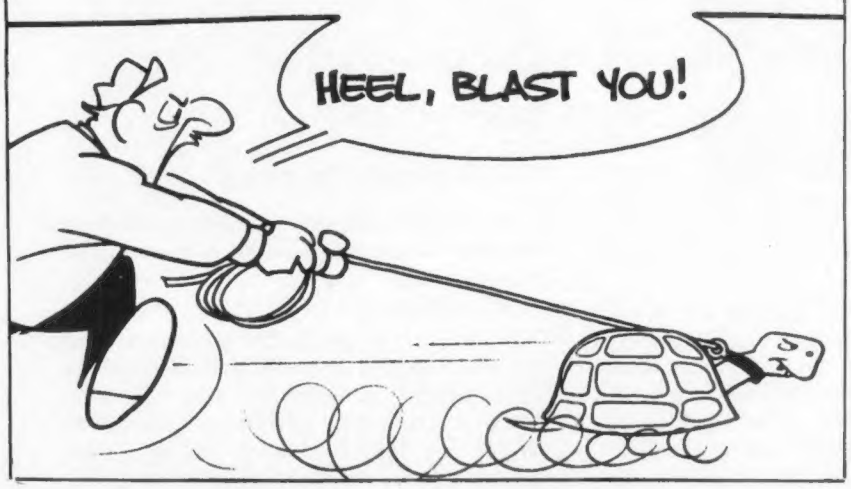

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Mike Peters

DAYTON DAILY NEWS

MIKE PETERS *Photo by SKIP PETERSON*

From time to time, over the past few years, John Fischetti, the editorial cartoonist of The Chicago Daily News, has suggested to your editor that we do a piece on MIKE PETERS, the gifted young editorial cartoonist of THE DAYTON (Ohio) DAILY NEWS. Not so long ago we had the opportunity to talk with Mike and we know you'll enjoy his thoughts about the profession as much as we did. Mike Peters' cartoons are also distributed by THE UNITED FEATURE SYNDICATE.

Q: You've said that when you started working at The Dayton Daily News, you didn't know exactly what kind of a cartoonist you wanted to be, haven't you?

A: For one thing, I knew I didn't enjoy putting labels on things — I guess that's because I can't spell or print very well. Anyhow, when I was growing up, there was the D.R. Fitzpatrick kind of cartoonist and then the kind of cartoonist that would just do an illustration of a newspaper headline. Fitzpatrick was an artist — this guy could put across an idea and frighten hell out of you! He would show 'Apathy' as a dark cloud hovering over St. Louis, people would see that cartoon and rush to shut their drapes. This guy was a beautiful draftsman.

The other type of editorial cartoonist at that time would start with some such headline as 'World mourns the death of Albert Schweitzer'. He'd draw a globe with those great old Ding Darling kind of eyes, with a little tear dripping down somewhere around the equator. Well, I didn't want to be either kind of cartoonist. And then Bill Mauldin came along and I think he made a real breakthrough — he began to use a lot of wry humor and brought something into editorial cartoons that I personally had not seen before. Possibly the only cartoonist of times gone by who was similar was Rollin Kirby who used humor a lot. I knew that this was where the editorial cartoon would be going, and that the old style cartoon showing Uncle Sam rolling up his sleeves was dying out—it just didn't make an effect—it didn't hit the people.

I decided I would use humor as the shill—as the enticement for somebody to look at my cartoon. To put it another way, I wanted to give the reader his medicine with honey. If I can do a cartoon which the reader immediately breaks up over, and then he gets the message a second later, that's what I'm aiming for. On the other side of the coin though, it's so easy, when you're using humor in this way, to eventually become an editorial page comic. When you fall into this trap, you don't say anything but only go for a joke, or make a pun out of the day's current events, and I'm afraid too many cartoonists do this. They forget they're there to make people mad. This is one of my own troubles—it's so easy to rely just on humor to cover up any faults in the cartoon. Mauldin's credo is 'if it's big, hit it!' Editorial cartoonists should deal with subjects that the average guy can't do anything about—big business, big government, big anything. Usually when you have bigness, you're going to find mistakes, and holier-than-thou attitudes, and people that can't take any kind of criticism. These are the people that we ought to be hitting all the time.

Q: You've said that you had a different kind of childhood from most kids—what was that like?

A: I grew up in St. Louis, never got any kind of good grades in school, and the fact that I did funny drawings of the kids around me was my only claim to fame at the time. The thing snowballed and I fell into the usual young artist's pattern of drawing for school newspapers,

belonging to the Poster Club, etc. It was through my mom that I met Bill Mauldin when I was 13 or 14. He was the editorial cartoonist of The Post-Dispatch. Mom has had a TV program in St. Louis for 23 or 24 years, her station was owned by the Pulitzers who owned the Post-Dispatch, so I kind of had an 'in' at Mauldin's paper. He was extremely nice to me —very kind to a little punk who didn't know anything about cartooning but just wanted to draw cartoons. He'd let me come in and sit in his office and he'd talk with me.

Q: What has it been like—having a TV star for a mom?

A: Her show was similar to the Mike Douglas show—an hour a day, 5 days a week—and it covered Illinois and Missouri. Mom was, and still is, a personality in St. Louis and I was always going on her program, drawing up slides for it, etc. This seemed like a very natural way of life at the time, and I figured that everybody grew up like that. Then when I went away to school, I realized that the average American isn't flooded with people asking for autographs when he goes out to dinner. The first time I came back home, after being away from Mom and Dad for maybe 4 months, we went out to dinner and when a bunch of people ran up to us, I jumped up thinking we were on fire!

I think the fact that my mom was in that position was one of the biggest reasons why I had to force myself to find my own niche. I knew I enjoyed drawing cartoons, and that I was extremely interested in what was going on around us. I knew I had a sense of humor, and editorial cartooning seemed to be the most natural thing I could do. So I started going in to see Mauldin. He was at The Post-Dispatch for about 3 years and then he moved to The Sun-Times in Chicago. Every once in a while I'd take the train up to Chicago to talk some more with him.

Eventually I went to Washington University in St. Louis and got a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree. (That and a dime will get you a cup of coffee).

In 1965, I had an interesting experience during a job-hunting visit to various papers in Chicago. I went to The Daily Defender, not realizing beforehand that it was a black newspaper and that they were only hiring blacks. Sometime later, incidentally, I got a call from the Editor of The Defender who said that he liked my work, and that although he couldn't hire me, he'd be interested in having me do freelance cartoons for his paper. So for a year I did freelance cartoons for The Defender under an assumed name.

Q: You worked for a year on The Chicago Daily News, didn't you?

A: I'd been rejected by all the papers in Chicago and was standing at the elevator at the Sun-Times, ready to go downstairs and take the train back home. It happened that Mauldin's office was next to the elevator. Now here's the weird thing—I had always been afraid to show Bill any of my cartoons, during all of the time I'd talked with him in St. Louis and Chicago. This fear stemmed from an experience I'd had with D.R. Fitzpatrick in St. Louis when I was about 13.

At that time my mom had arranged for me to go in and show Fitzpatrick a bunch of my stuff. After looking at my cartoons, he told me I really oughtn't to go into the business, that it was too rough, and that I should get into something entirely different such as selling or merchandising. But because I didn't realize the magnitude of his influence on our field, this discouraging criticism didn't really faze me. However it *did* affect me as far as Mauldin was concerned. *I realized his skill* and the power of his position at the Post-Dispatch, so I never showed him any of my cartoons, fearing that if he said the same thing that Fitz had said, it would really hurt, coming from Mauldin. But, standing there at the elevator, I figured it was 'now or never', so I showed Bill my stuff. The long and short of it was that he called the Editor of the Chicago Daily News and said, "Hire this kid!" And I was hired as a staff artist.

I was there for a year, got drafted and was sent to Ft. Leonard Wood where I started doing cartoons for the camp newspaper during basic training. My MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) turned out to be 'illustrator' so I stayed there for another 6 months doing cartoons. I considered myself extremely lucky but Mauldin didn't think so. He told me, "Look, you go to Nam to learn about things". But I'm not made of the same stuff Mauldin is, unfortunately. After that I was sent to Okinawa as an illustrator, my wife came 6 months later, and we lived in a little Okinawan village offbase. Our outfit made leaflets to be sent to places like Thailand, but most of my time was spent doing signs for the men's room such as 'Wash your hands after flushing', etc. With plenty of time on my hands I did freelance cartoons for The Okinawan Morning Star, a local American newspaper. This was the first editorial cartoon I'd ever done for anything other than a school newspaper. After getting out of the Army a year and a half later, I went back to Chicago and my old job for The Daily News. Three

'HE DROPPED IN ONE OF HIS VICE PRESIDENTIAL PAPERS AGAIN....'

R. NIXON'S Believe It or Not!

OPTICAL ILLUSION
(THERE ARE NINE) TAPES HERE
SUBMITTED BY J.F. BUZHARDT

THE HOTTER IT GETS THE COOLER I GET
Epitaph WHITTIER CAL.

MISS R.M. WOODS OF WASH D.C. STAYED IN THIS POSITION FOR 18 MINUTES WHILE HUMMING A MEDLEY OF BUDDY HOLLY HITS IN TO A DICTAPHONE

MRS. P.N. OF KEY BISCAYNE, SAVED 300 GALS OF FUEL ON HER WAY TO THE GROCERY—HER PILOT STAYED UNDER 50 MPH.

JUNIPER ROOT SHAPED LIKE TWO TAPE REELS. FOUND IN A GARDEN AT THE WHITE HOUSE

© DAYTON DAILY NEWS

'TELL HER FOLKS TO FORGET THE RANSOM — SHE'S DECIDED TO JOIN HIM....'

months later Mauldin heard about a job in Dayton, Ohio, so he called Jim Fain, the Editor of The Dayton Daily News and said, "there's a kid here you might think is good." Once again, Bill had put in a good word for me. Mr. Fain was coming to Chicago anyway to attend the Democratic Convention in 1968, so we met at that time and I was hired.

Q: What's your schedule at The News?

A: I come in at around 7:30 in the morning and read from then till 12. They have an editorial conference here, as they do at most papers, but I don't enjoy getting into these. Every once in a while my boss slips me a hint that my presence would be welcomed, so I go for a few times but then slip away once more. I try to get an idea by 1:30 or 2, then start drawing and hope to finish by 5:30 or 6.

Q: Would you tell us about the different types of letters you get from readers?

A: Well, there are those which ask for originals. I never give them but some people get very irate if you don't. But, for what it's worth to other cartoonists, here's the procedure I sometimes go through to satisfy them. I ask the guys in the engraving department to pull me a 'velox' which is a lifelike copy of the original in the same size. Back in my office I mark all over the velox with a blue pencil, do some light sketching on it, and go around the lines very poorly. I dab white paint all over the place, inside the white areas, put in a couple of fingerprints, spray it with acrylic, and the finished product looks just like an original.

Then there's the type of reader who's very irate over the cartoon you did but he's sensible—he has the ability to express his ideas.

But what I really enjoy is the reader who doesn't take the time to get a piece of paper to write and say how much he hates you. He rips your cartoon out of the paper, and above the drawing he writes, "you lousy commie" or something like that. He generally includes a number of other adjectives I won't mention here. I've saved a lot of these in case I ever do a book. A funny thing too—a lot of this latter kind of response is done with crayon. Somehow I've always figured maybe they weren't allowed anything with a pointy edge on it, so they were only given crayons!

You *do* make enemies in this job. It's strange, though, but when you do a brutal cartoon that you think is most bitter, really bearing down on someone in government, it is often that very victim who will call you up to ask for the original. This really deflates your ego!

A problem for me in this business is that I start to get stir crazy from time to time—I'm not an office kind of person and you have to be in this job. Bill

Mauldin worked at The Sun-Times till he finally had had it and then he moved to Arizona where he's now working full-time. It's the greatest if you can work out of your home and I'd like to do this eventually.

Another problem with most of the fairly new editorial cartoonists is that we rely too much on style—on what is going to look good. I think the idea, the bitterness, the venom that a cartoon ought to have is being forgotten many times, as is the idea of always attacking. That's wrong—the great cartoons that will be remembered will be those that, along with being artistically good and also funny, are going to carry the bitter, wry message. Herblock, by the way, has never lost his hatred, and his bite for evil. Speaking of Herblock, a bunch of us were having dinner with him some time ago and someone asked how he kept it up year after year. Herb said, "the reason is because every day when I read the papers, I get astounded, and I get amazed when I see what these bastards are doing—every day I'm shocked!" If a cartoonist is shocked every day, there's nobody that's going to be more effective —he really feels what he's drawing about. He *must* use *humor* as the piece of honey, but then he has to hit the reader between the eyes.

There's been an influx of young blood into the editorial cartoon field in the last 5 years. I can't think of any other time during which so many fairly decent cartoonists have come on the scene at one time. We're right in a very exciting moment in our vocation—we've been changing over the last 10 or 15 years to a good combination of American cartooning and British cartooning.

Q: Will you say a little more about that?

A: I got into a discussion of this with Bill Sanders, the editorial cartoonist of THE MILWAUKEE JOURNAL, at the AAEC Convention in London a few years ago. I was enamored of the humor as expressed by the British cartoonists and thought we had nobody like them in America. Bill thought that the American cartoonists were better because they said something and the Britishers didn't.

British cartoonists will often deal with something other than politics. During the English beef shortage it was reported in the papers that some little old lady had had to eat part of her shoe, and a number of the cartoonists jumped on this idea. After a few weeks one gets a little tired of this repetition.

But the new breed of editorial cartoonist in America is trying to get a combination of the good qualities of both British and American cartoons. It's exciting to be a cartoonist now because you can see these trends happening! Editorial cartooning is not stagnating—it's growing all the time! ●

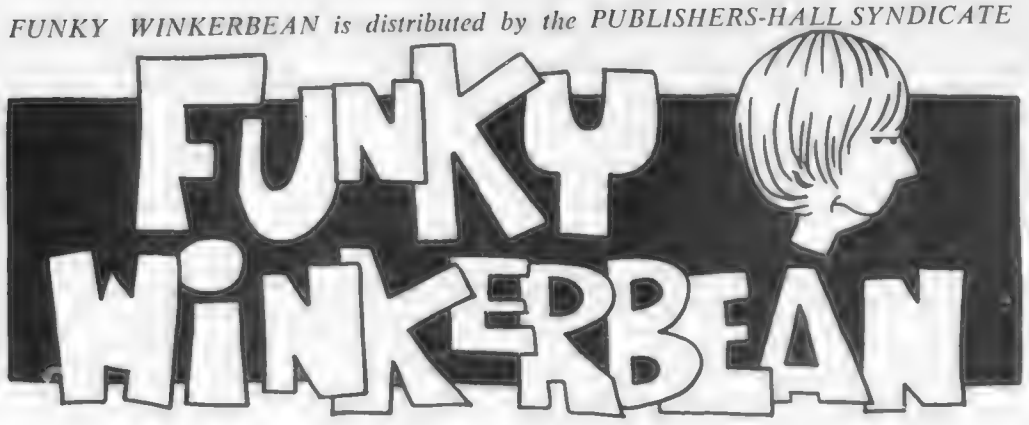
Mike Peters' cartoons are distributed by THE UNITED FEATURE SYNDICATE.

THUMBS DOWN
STATE DEPARTMENT
IRRESPONSIBLE HIT-RUN RAIDS ON CUBA
WORK TO BE DONE
U.S.
OUR ANSWER TO THE SOVIET THREAT
AN ASSEMBLANCE, HOWEVER, TO OUR OWN HANDS IS PURELY COINCIDENTAL
JACK BICKHAM PITCHED, AS A FORD MAN, EARNED NEARLY
HALF-A-MILLION DOLLARS AND IS THE ONLY GOLFER
NEW GUARD - OLD GAME
GOP
ROCKY
OTHERWISE READY, WILLING, ABLE
DEVELOPMENT
LEGAL SANCTION
AND NOT BEFORE!
LBJ
MEMO TO DEGAULLE AND ALL OTHER CRITICS OF USPOLICY IN S.E. ASIA: "WHEN AGGRESSION STOPS WE WILL LEAVE VIETNAM"
'WHO SENT ME'!
POOR PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN SHOULD HAVE GONE BEFORE U.N.
'SAYS WHO?'
MOVIES ARE BETTER THAN EVER
THE VATICAN
'HELP!'
'PEOPLE PRETEND TO LISTEN TO OUR TROUBLE, THEY SHUFFLE LOTS OF PAPERS— THEN DON'T DO ANYTHING.'
— CBS OF THE POOR AND THE WAR ON POVERTY
FREE MEDICINE — FREE AID
700 MILLION FREE PEOPLE LEFT IN ASIA
ABYSS OF RED TYRANNY
REMEMBER WEAPON — USE IT
YOUR VOTE
IT'S NOT BEEN EASY ON US, EITHER, DOC!
MEDICAL SCIENCE'S CURRENT EFFORTS ON HEART TRANSPLANTS
OUR HEARTSTRINGS
THE POINT MUST GET OVER!
MDE EDUCATION PROGRAM
CONGRESS
YOUTH
NECESSITY FOR SCIENCE-ENGINEERING STUDENTS
NECESSITY FOR SCIENCE ENGINEERING STUDENTS
PROGRESSIVELY CREATING A
GREATER AMERICA
LABOR
LET'S GO ON TO OTHER THINGS
MONTHLY MORNING QUARTERBACKING
ARM CHAIR WORLD AFFAIRS EXPERTS
CURE ALL FOR FAT MOUTHS
PROPOSED AMENDMENT
1950 IMPERIAL SECURITY ACT
WOULD PROHIBIT
FONDA-TYPE TRAVEL
WITHIN

A cartoonist catches heck for many things. In this instance from his editor who complained that 'hands' were the most overworked, overused symbols an editorial cartoonist uses. These are just a few used over a period of 15 years by Phoenix Gazette Editorial Cartoonist Bert Whitman who naturally doesn't agree with his editor . . .

but concedes,
HE MIGHT
BE RIGHT.

FUNKY WINKERBEAN is distributed by the PUBLISHERS-HALL SYNDICATE



By Tom Batiuk

TOM BATIUK, who writes and draws the popular FUNKY WINKERBEAN comic strip, which is distributed by the PUBLISHERS-HALL SYNDICATE, was a full-time art teacher at a junior high school before he created his feature. Nowadays, he only finds time to do substitute art teaching occasionally, what with dailies and a Sunday to produce. However, he frequently takes his sketch pad to his old high school to draw students and teachers, with the thought that this keeps his strip more realistic. Tom ***and his wife, Cathy, live in Elyria, Ohio.***

Q: As a youngster you were more interested in the adventure type of strip than in the humor strip, weren't you?

A: Yes, I was very much influenced by the comic book superhero type of art, and all through junior high and high school I read most of the science fiction I could get my hands on. I liked the far-out, fantasy type of work and never really considered doing a humor strip. Of course I *read* and enjoyed strips like 'BC', 'The Wizard of Id', and 'Peanuts'. But I thought it would be an awfully hard job to write a humor strip every day and easier to do an adventure strip. I figured that you could write a story and then be set for a month or so.

Q: What was it that eventually pointed you in the direction of humor?

A: Well, as you know, I'm an art teacher, and if FUNKY was motivated by any one thing, the finger would have to point toward school study halls. Study halls are deadly for students but they're just as bad for teachers — especially *my* study halls. The way I ran them, I was one of the few teachers that would get detentions from the *kids!* So to kill time I'd doodle and sketch up ideas — some school-related and some not. Of course an art teacher is always putting funny drawings on the board but I never thought of doing them professionally. In study hall, though, I noticed that I was compiling quite a file of those doodles. I finally took some of them to our local paper which just happened at the time to be looking for a cartoon for their weekly teen page. I worked up a few ideas which they liked and, as a result, I began to appear once a week. Since I had no preconceived idea as to how I would do my cartoon, I just started writing what I would have liked to see in the paper as a reader myself. I didn't write down to teens, or try to make any special appeals—just did what I myself liked. And the type of humor that came out wasn't necessarily involved with kids running out of gas and pushing cars up hills, or with girls talking on the telephone all day long. I really hadn't encountered a lot of these situations which had been overdone in cartoons before myself. So I wrote what was on my mind when I was in school—really important and weighty things like world problems, the draft, pimples, and things like that.

I enjoyed doing this weekly cartoon and I got a nice reaction from readers who seemed to enjoy the type of humor I was doing. After a couple of years I

FUNKY WINKERBEAN

By Tom Batiuk

IMAGINE, FUNKY ··· A TRIP TO WASHINGTON!
AND ALL THE CONTEST WINNERS WILL BE GIVEN FRAMED CERTIFICATES OF COMMENDATION!
© Field Enterprises, Inc., 1973
BATIUK
7-31
PLUS THE TOP FIVE WINNERS GET THEIR THEMES RUN THROUGH A SHREDDER!

decided to shuffle through the quite considerable backlog of cartoons I'd done, in order to pick the best of them. These I took to a syndicate in our area. They suggested that I change from a panel to a strip and add three or four primary characters. Fortunately, I found that a strip offered me more in the way of character development and writing. Having no preconceived notion as to how I wanted the characters to be, I just started drawing upon my experiences with people around me whom I knew. For instance, Rita Wrighton is an example of an idealistic, head-in-the-clouds young teacher, fresh out of college, who's going to completely reshape the educational world. The problems that she encounters when she's thrown into a first-year teaching situation in the strip, were based on problems faced by students I had seen preparing to become teachers when I was in college. And I had many of her problems during *my* first year of teaching too. My student characters have been drawn from close friends of mine, friends from college or from students I've actually had in class. More often than not, they've been combinations of various people—sometimes the appearance of one person and the personality of another. So I had a cast of characters that I identified with, that I had worked with, and that I knew very well. They've just seemed to develop on their own from that point on.

Q: Did you take the strip to New York and to the various syndicates?

A: As luck would have it, PUBLISHERS-HALL SYNDICATE at that time was interested in having a strip of this type. I was very high on 'Winkerbean & Co.' and the syndicate liked 'Funky', so we compromised and came up with 'Funky Winkerbean'.

I guess because of the loose way I write the strip, it's always taking on new dimensions and adding new qualities. I still follow the basic philosophy I mentioned earlier, namely that I write what I'd like to see if I were the reader. So whatever interests me at the time I'm doing ideas determines the direction the strip takes at that moment. I'd be bored if I were repeatedly grinding out stock situations and not adding new elements constantly. It's as much for my own excitement and interest, as it is for the reader, that I like to branch off and do new things regularly.

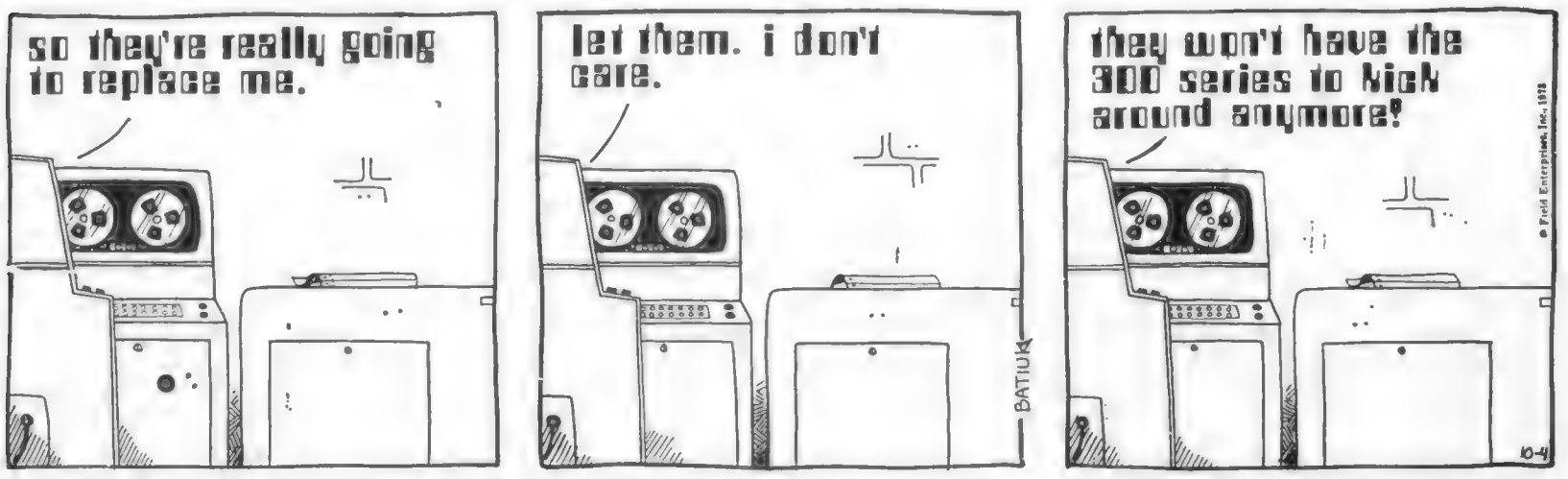
I've been having a lot of fun lately with my talking school computer. Through him I give a computer's-eye view of the world which has been ignored up to now. He's a self-centered computer —'A Computer Chauvinist!' His biggest thrill is scheduling a student's homeroom on the opposite side of the building from his first-period class. And when he's not sitting around messing up students' schedules, he gives little insights into computer thinking, such as the fact that they're filled with thousands of little toes that they count on. Sometimes he talks to the Xerox machine and they wonder if there's more to life than just reproduction.

Basically I write about our world as seen through the actions and the eyes of my characters, and each one has his own peculiar slant on life. I poke fun at the adult establishment but I also poke fun at the kids. Each group has its fallacies, and having been both a student and a teacher, I feel that it's fair game to hit both of them equally. I try to point out the foibles of the world in general through the characters. When I make fun of a teachers' staff meeting, hopefully the humor applies to staff meetings everywhere. When I'm at school, I absorb everything that goes on but often my best ideas come to me in other places—maybe at a local hamburger stand. I rarely see something that I can translate immediately into a strip.

I've been lucky in that I seem to be able to sit down and write ideas whenever I want to. I have a big blotter on my

FUNKY WINKERBEAN

By Tom Batiuk


so they're really going to replace me.
let them. i don't care.
BATIUK
they won't have the 300 series to kick around anymore!
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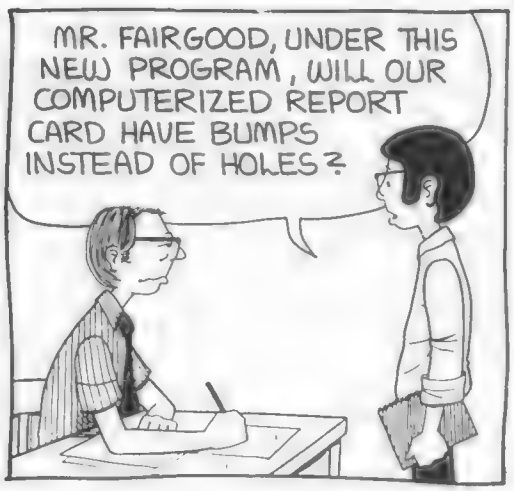
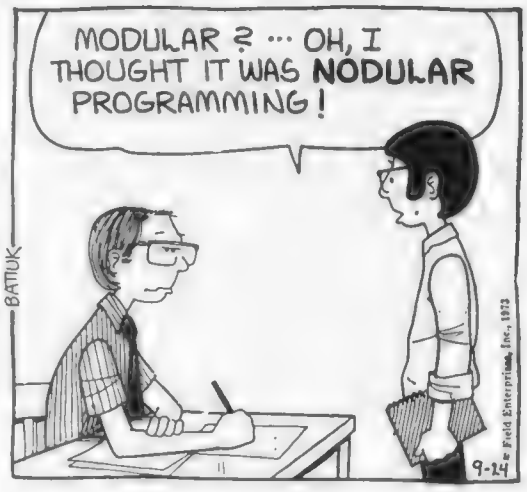
10-4





I THINK THE FACT THAT SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED NEXT YEAR DUE TO LACK OF FUNDS, WOULD HAVE TO RANK AS THE MAJOR DISAPPOINTMENT!
BATIUK
4-23

FUNKY WINKERBEAN is distributed by the PUBLISHERS-HALL SYNDICATE

FUNKY WINKERBEAN
AAAGH!
SURE IT HURTS! BIG DEAL ... WHAT ARE YOU? A QUITTER?
YOU'VE GOT TO LEARN TO PLAY WITH PAIN!!
THAT'S DISGUSTING! I THINK THAT THE WAY THE COACH TREATS HIS ATHLETES IS BRUTAL AND DEHUMANIZING!
THAT'S NOT THE COACH!
THAT'S THE BAND DIRECTOR TRYING TO GET MARY ELLEN FREEGLY TO PLAY THE TUBA WITH HER BRACES!
BATTIUK

board and sometimes when I'm drawing I may happen to think of a germ of an idea which I immediately jot down on a corner of the blotter. After a few weeks the blotter's completely filled up and I have to change it. I guess I'm different from most cartoonists in that the art work takes up 70 or 80% of my time and the ideas 20% maybe. From what I've heard from other cartoonists, they usually spend a great deal of time on the ideas and not so much on drawing. My wife, Cathy, is often a source of ideas. And sometimes we'll be talking with friends and one of them will say something which may trigger an idea which can be used.

As a kid I felt a kinship with the person who had created a favorite strip and I enjoyed what he had to say to me. With this in mind I'm trying to share experiences and funny ideas with readers. The relationship a strip has with its readers is the same as you experience when you get together with friends, and everybody sits around sharing stories and telling humorous anecdotes.

Q: Would you say something more about some of the major characters in 'Funky'.

A: Funky himself is a synthesis of about 80% of all students—I want him to be someone that everybody identifies with. He's the focal point through which you get into the strip—the straight man who's in most of the situations. The other characters bounce off of him—he's the main spoke. In personality he's average —not too loud, not too shy and not too quiet. The same with his looks. Les, his best friend, is a loser—a leader of the 'out' crowd. Probably the peak of his popularity came when he was a hall monitor at the time the school caught fire, and he refused to let the Fire Department in without a hall pass. He's tried computer dating services and the computer not only didn't get him any dates —it broke one he had for the coming weekend!

'Crazy Harry' has really grown on me. He's a rebel and the free spirit of the strip. He's a stereo freak and one of his innovations is playing frozen pizzas on it. But he doesn't do this any more because the cost of getting mozzarella out of his woofer got to be too prohibitive.

'Bull Bushka', the star fullback for the school, came out with a negative IQ score. He managed to achieve this by not only missing every question on his test but his mere physical presence lowered the score of the two people sitting on either side of him.

On the faculty side of the ledger we have 'Fred Fairgood', the high school counselor who's always willing to sit down and rap with the students. When he was interpreting the graphs on one student's aptitude test, he told the guy that his graph looked like a bunch of mountains and that perhaps the student should become a ski instructor.

I spoke about 'Rita Wrighton' a while ago—she's the the idealistic young teacher. She went out for team teaching and her team lost—all in all she found school a growing experience during her first

YOU SEEM KINDA DISCOURAGED, LES! WHAT'S WRONG?
WHEN I WAS IN MR. FAIRGOOD'S OFFICE I TOOK A LOOK AT MY STUDENT PERSONALITY PROFILE!
WHAT DID IT SAY?
NOTHING...
BATTIUK

THE P.T.A. WILL REALLY BE PLEASED WITH THESE COOKIES I MADE FOR THE BAKE SALE!
BATIUK

R-R-R-I-N-G!
4-27

SHRIEK!!
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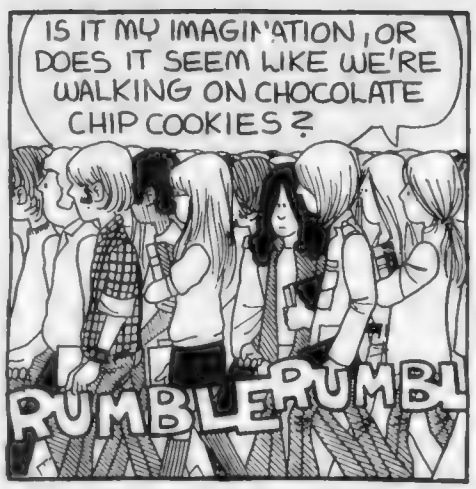
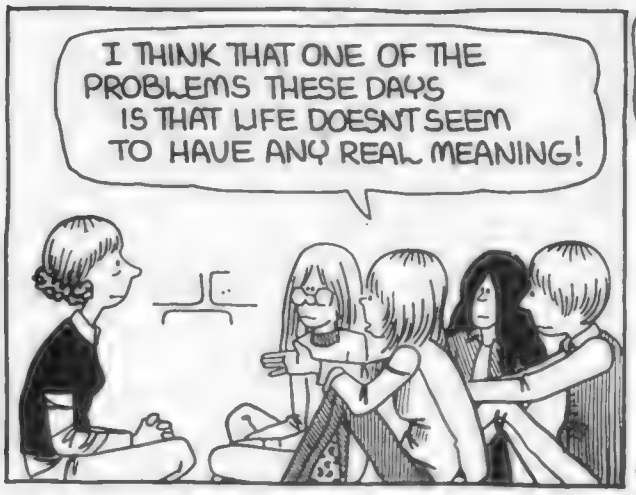
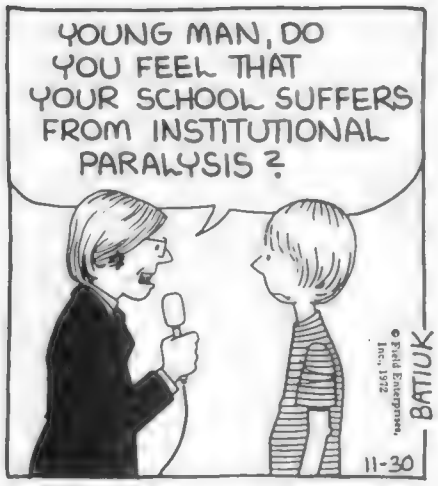
RUMBLE RUMBL


IS IT MY IMAGINATION, OR DOES IT SEEM LIKE WE'RE WALKING ON CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES?
RUMBLE RUMBL


I THINK THAT ONE OF THE PROBLEMS THESE DAYS IS THAT LIFE DOESN'T SEEM TO HAVE ANY REAL MEANING!
12-27

THAT'S BECAUSE YOU NEED TO FILL YOUR LIFE WITH MEANINGFUL GOALS!
© Field Enterprises, Inc., 1972
BATIUK

TAKE MYSELF FOR EXAMPLE! I SAVE GREEN STAMPS!

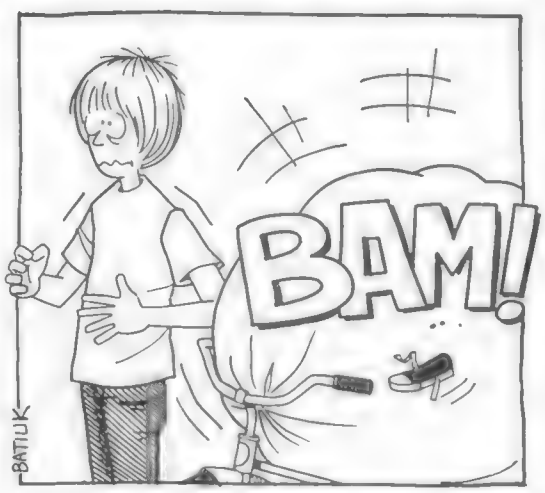

YOUNG MAN, DO YOU FEEL THAT YOUR SCHOOL SUFFERS FROM INSTITUTIONAL PARALYSIS?
© Field Enterprises, Inc. 1972
BATIUK
11-30

YES, I DEFINITELY DO!

HAVE YOU ANY IDEA WHAT CAUSES IT?

I THINK IT'S THE LUNCHES!

BUMP!
8-17


BAM!
BATIUK

WHOEVER OKAYED AIR-BAGS FOR BICYCLES WAS OUT OF HIS MIND!

HE DID IT!!
CRAZY HARRY LISTENED TO 'MY SWEET ANGEL' AT FULL VOLUME, AND REACHED NIRVANA ON THE TWO HUNDREDTH REPLAY!
BATIUK
2-3
WELL, SPORT, WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY?
IT'S GOT A GOOD BEAT AND IT'S GOOD TO DANCE TO! I'D GIVE IT AN EIGHTY-FIVE!

year—she grew very bitter.

I like to create characters that are easily recognizable to people but which haven't been done before—such as the band director who has picked up an idiosyncrasy that most band directors have—namely that good music is not enough in itself but it's meant to win band contests.

Q: Could we add a few personal facts about yourself and about your art training?

A: Sure—I'm 26, was born in Akron, Ohio, and moved to Elyria, Ohio, where we now live, when I was in the third grade. I took art in high school and went to Kent State University, where I was a Fine Arts Major with the idea of getting into cartooning in the back of my mind. But I switched to Education in my junior year when I realized that I was going to have to get a job when I got out of school, so I decided that I'd teach art. Nowadays, since I'm doing 'Funky', I substitute as an art teacher and don't work full time at school. My wife, Cathy, whom I met in high school, is a first grade teacher, and my ace assistant. She does the coloring of the Sunday pages and has picked up more expertise in this area than I have. When I get behind, she also fills in blacks. And, as I mentioned earlier, she's a good critic and sounding board for ideas.

Even though I'm not teaching art full-time any more, I go back to my old high school with a sketchbook and draw people. I like to keep up the contacts and when I get my ideas later on, I think they're more realistic because of these sketching visits. Besides they get me out of the studio where I have a hermit-like existence.

Tom & Cathy Batiuk

My ideas range from the whimsical to the bizarre and I never know what I'm going to come up with on a certain day—since one is in a different mood each day. My ideas come from free association—wherever my mind happens to be wandering at the time. I may be thinking of something I've read recently, someplace I've gone, a movie I've seen, or a talk I've had with friends. It's interesting for me to watch my characters grow and develop, and I find that they become more like real people. They're a lot warmer than they used to be. It's exciting to be able to express my feelings and my ideas through the characters, and it's very gratifying when readers write in their comments.

Q: Do you think comics are here to stay?

A: By the very nature of the medium, I think they're always going to be around—there's something irresistible about seeing the pictures and words together and people are always attracted to the combination. Of course there's the trend to more topical material in strips but the most important thing in a humor strip is still being humorous—if it's not, then the whole thing is rather meaningless. ❶

REMEMBER THAT THEME ON 'WHAT AMERICA MEANS TO ME' THAT WE WROTE IN SCHOOL LAST SPRING?
I WROTE ABOUT HOW AMERICA MEANT INTEGRITY, HONESTY, AND FAIR PLAY!
WELL, MY THEME WAS PICKED AS ONE OF THE WINNERS AND I GET TO GO TO WASHINGTON TO MEET OUR NATION'S LEADERS AND HAVE DINNER AT THE WHITE HOUSE!
7-30
I DON'T GET THE CONNECTION!

Famed Philippine Comic Book Artist

ALFREDO P. ALCALA

ALFREDO ALCALA

MANUEL AUAD, a longtime CARTOONIST PROfiles subscriber, was a boyhood friend of top comic book artist, ALFREDO ALCALA, in the Philippines. Among other things, Alcala is currently drawing pages for MARVEL COMICS and we reproduce several of them here with the kind permission of MARVEL. Manuel Auad, who lives in San Francisco with his wife, Pattie, prefaces his interview with some comments about his friend Alcala.

by Manuel Auad

Alfredo Alcala is one of the foremost comic book illustrators in the Philippines. A "grade school dropout" as he sometimes likes to call himself, he left school at an early age to pursue his first love: to draw for the comics. And he has been doing it ever since. Alcala has been described as a prolific artist in every sense of the word. "Earthy" is another way his art has been described; it just as well describes him too. Never to be known as a "middle of the road" kind of person, Alcala is quite a controversial individual known for his frankness and honesty. He believes in his work and in himself, and yet, humility is never too far behind.

I first met Alcala through another friend (also an artist). There was no instant rapport, but through the years our friendship grew stronger. When I left the Philippines 13 years ago, I knew somehow we'd meet again and last year I went back to see him. We simply picked up where we left off.

Q: Alfred, you have been drawing for the comics for a long time now, suppose you tell us how it all started.

A: I started drawing for the comics in November of 1948 for Ace Publications. At that time they had only two comic books, *Philipino Komics* and *Tagalog Klasiks*. But my first comic illustrations appeared in *Bituin* (Star) *Komics* in October 1948. However, prior to this, I was employed by the National Council of Boy Scouts of the Philippines as an artist illustrator and I did a lot of sign board painting. After a year I quit that job and got a job as a designer for a wrought iron place. Most of my designs were for chandeliers, table lamps, garden sets, fancy lamp stands, and sometimes — are you ready for this — church pulpits! But somehow, deep down inside I knew I wanted to draw for the comics. I wanted to be able to take a blank sheet of paper and create people that would literally come alive and tell a story in the process. So I went home one day and did a whole bunch of samples of my work and showed them to all the publishers of comics. I have to admit I wasn't very successful right away. Many even tried to discourage me, but I knew what I wanted, so I kept at it until I made it.

Q: Were there any members of your family who influenced you to go into comics?

A: No, I am the only artist in the family; and, frankly, they're happy about it.

Q: Well, can you tell us something about your formal art training.

A: Formal art training?! My "formal art training" consisted of copying drawings from artists I admired. I'm afraid I taught myself everything I know.

Q: Who, then, would you say influenced you the most in your early years.

A: I would say Hal Foster did with his *Tarzan* and *Prince Valiant*. And also Alex Raymond when he was doing *Flash Gordon*. But the artist that really inspired me was Louis K. Fine (Lou Fine). His drawings really impressed me. He did the *Black Condor*, and *Dollman*, the *Ray, Uncle Sam, Stuart Taylor*, and many covers for National, Hit, Jumbo, Jungle, Wonderworld, Fight, Planet, the Flame, etc.

Q: I believe that as you grew older you were also influenced by well known illustrators, painters and muralists. Can you tell us about them and why they influenced you.

A: That's true. As I went along, I discovered other artists I began to admire, people like J. C. Leyendecker, Dean Cornwell, Frank Brangwyn, Howard Pyle, N. C. Wyeth, Maxfield Parrish, Herbert Paus, Franklin Booth, Walter Jardin, Joseph Clement Coll, Albert Dorne, Robert Fawcett and a host of others. I suppose I will have to admit that J. C. Leyendecker has the most lasting influence with me, especially with my color illustrations. But then again, when some people see my oil paintings they claim they see the Dean Cornwell influence. I don't know, it is hard for me to say. I try not to let one artist influence me too much. In other words, If I did a Brangwyn figure, the drapery will be that of Leyendecker. The action will probably be that of Lou Fine and the background will be that of H. Paus or Franklin Booth. Then again in the next panel I may just do everything in reverse!

Q: Let's go back in time for a while and tell me again how your art helped the Americans during the war.

A: Gosh! That's been so long ago it hardly seems worth mentioning. Well, I had a bicycle in those days, you see, and everyday I would peddle around the city (Manila) and

LORD PROTECT ME.! YOU-- YOU'RE A...
...VAMPIRE!!!
HOW ASTUTE, MY DEAR STEVENS. YES, I AM A VAMPIRE... AND YOU ARE MY--
--VICTIM.
AND AS MY VICTIM, YOU SHALL SURRENDER YOUR BLOOD... THAT I MIGHT LIVE ON THROUGH AN ETERNITY OF BLOOD-SPATTERED NIGHTS. YOUR DEATH FOR MY IMMORTALITY OF UNDEATH.!
NO-- I SHALL NEVER SUCCUMB TO YOUR KISS OF DEPRAVITY.!
AH, BUT YOU HAVE LITTLE CHOICE. BESIDES, WHY RESIST... WHEN YOU CAN BE INITIATED INTO THE CULT OF VAMPIRISM, AND SHARE A SIMILAR IMMORTAL EXISTENCE?
BECAUSE I HAVE NO WISH TO PARTAKE OF YOUR FILTHY IMMORTALITY.! LET ME LIVE A CLEAN LIFE AND DIE WHEN IT IS MY TIME... JUST AS IT IS NOW YOUR TIME TO...
--DIE.!
BLOOD DEATH
WRITER: DOUG MOENCH
ART-LETTERING: ALFREDO P'ALCALA

© by MARVEL COMICS

THE FIEND WAS ***OVERCONFIDENT...*** BECAUSE HE SAW NO ***CRUCIFIX*** OR ***WOODEN STAKE,*** HE WAS SMUG WITH ***VICTORY.*** BUT HE OVERLOOKED THE FACT THAT ***FLAMES*** ARE ***ALSO*** FATAL TO THE VAMPIRE.

HE LET HIS ***BASER INSTINCTS*** DICTATE HIS ACTIONS... AND DID NOT ***THINK.*** IT WAS HIS ***DOWNFALL--***

--AS IT IS ***ALWAYS*** THE DOWNFALL OF EVIL!

THE END

HE COULDA LIVED ***FOREVER,*** EVEN IF IT HADDA BE AS A ***VAMPIRE...*** AND INSTEAD HE'S GOTTA PLAY THE ***GOOD GUY.*** THESE LOUSY FLICKS ARE ***NEVER*** REALISTIC.

MAN, IF THAT WAS ***ME,*** I'D LET THE GOOFY VAMPIRE ***BITE*** ME... SO'S I COULDA LIVE ***FOREVER.***

WORK ALL MY LIFE JUST TO MAKE A LITTLE MONEY AND ***ENJOY*** MYSELF AND ***LOOK*** AT ME--I GOT THE ***MONEY*** NOW, BUT I'M TOO OLD TO ENJOY IT. PROBABLY ***KICK OFF*** IN TWENTY YEARS... AND THE ***LAST TEN*** OF THOSE'LL BE SPENT IN A ***WHEELCHAIR.***

IT JUST AIN'T ***RIGHT.*** EVEN IF I ***COULD*** FIND A WAY TO LIVE FOREVER, I'D END UP SPENDIN' ***MOST*** OF MY MONEY ON THAT NAGGIN' WIFE AND HER EXPENSIVE HABITS... NOT TO MENTION THAT NO-GOOD SIFTNESS ***SON*** I GOT.

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ANG IBA'Y NANGAMATAY SA TINDI NG INIT...

GAYON PA MAN, ANG PAGLALAKBAY AY NAGPATULOY NA MARATING ANG NASA-BING POOK...

HUWAG KAYONG MAWALAN NG PAG-ASA'T MALAPIT NA TAYO...

SA LOOB NG PITONG BUWANG PAGTITIIS NA PAG-LALAKBAY, ANG LUPAING MASAGA-NA'Y NARATING DIN...

CARTOONIST PROfiles Editor, Jud Hurd, was very surprised and pleased to receive this drawing of himself by Alfredo Alcala. Alcala used a photo of your editor which had appeared in a previous issue of the magazine as reference, and sent the portrait from the Philippines in the care of Manuel Auad who did this interview. It's in full color and now hangs in our living room.

Alcala's own 'Four'ain-brush'.

try to spot hidden Japanese pill boxes. I would remember these and as soon as I got home I would draw a detailed map with the locations of the pill boxes and turn this over to a guerrilla leader. Then he would turn it over to the Americans. I remember how I would get a big kick doing these things. I would imagine myself as one of my comic book heroes. When I think what could have happened had they ever caught on, I have to shudder.

Q: What would have happened?

A: Simple, chopped my head off.

Q: Do you have to put yourself in the "mood" before you start on a story?

A: Frankly, since I have always loved to draw I guess I'm always in the mood. But if I'm not, then maybe I'll do the backgrounds first and do the figures later. Also listening to classical music helps me.

Q: Do you set yourself a schedule?

A: Not really. I can do it anytime — day or night. It doesn't make any difference to me. I've gone thru many sleepless nights drawing from sunrise to sunset and back to sunrise again.

Q: What was the longest period you worked straight through without any sleep?

A: I think the longest period I went straight through was four days and four nights. I did eighteen pages, three wrap around covers and a bunch of color guides.

Q: What was the most number of pages you did in the shortest length of time or in one sitting:

A: One time I finished twelve pages in nine hours.

Q: Do you have any assistants who do the inking or penciling for you?

A: No I don't. I do all my penciling, inking and lettering. I somehow always felt that the minute you let someone else have a hand in your work, no matter what, it's not you anymore. It's like riding in a bicycle built for two — or something to that effect.

Q: From what I know, most of the Filipino artists use the Chinese brush for their work, but you use a "fountain brush" which you designed yourself. Can you tell us how you developed it.

A: You mean this? Well, I'll tell you. In the beginning, I used all kinds of brushes - Chinese, American, you name it. I found myself constantly dipping into the ink bottle. Do a few strokes and dip into the bottle, dip n' do, dip n' do. To me this was a waste of time!

So, I got hold of a Chinese brush, ripped off the tip and then I got an old fountain pen, unscrewed the tip and worked the bristles into that end. Then I just suck in the ink and it worked! I found out I could finish two or three pages without an open bottle of ink next to me which my kids, while playing, would knock over, spilling it all over my finished pages. I remember a while back I bought a regular fountain brush made in Japan. It was very nice, but the ink would just gush out from the pen and it made it impossible to make fine lines. Then there was a German brand, but this one did not work out either because the ink would constantly get clogged. What I have done is just the opposite from all of these things. I control the flow of the ink and I definitely am able to draw very fine lines. I hope to have this idea of mine patented someday, should I find someone interested.

Q: How would you rate the Filipino comic artists with the ones from the United States?

A: Oh, now that is a hard question. There are many great comic artists in the States, no question about it. But we have been in the comics for over a quarter of a century now and I like to think that some of us can hold our own too.

Q: After all these years of drawing for the comics, do you feel you have reached your peak, or do you feel you still have a long way to go?

A: I feel like I haven't reached the half way mark, if there is such a thing as a peak. Everytime I look at some of the drawings or paintings of people I have always admired, I realize how amateurish I still am. You know the old saying about the more you learn the more you find out how little you really know.

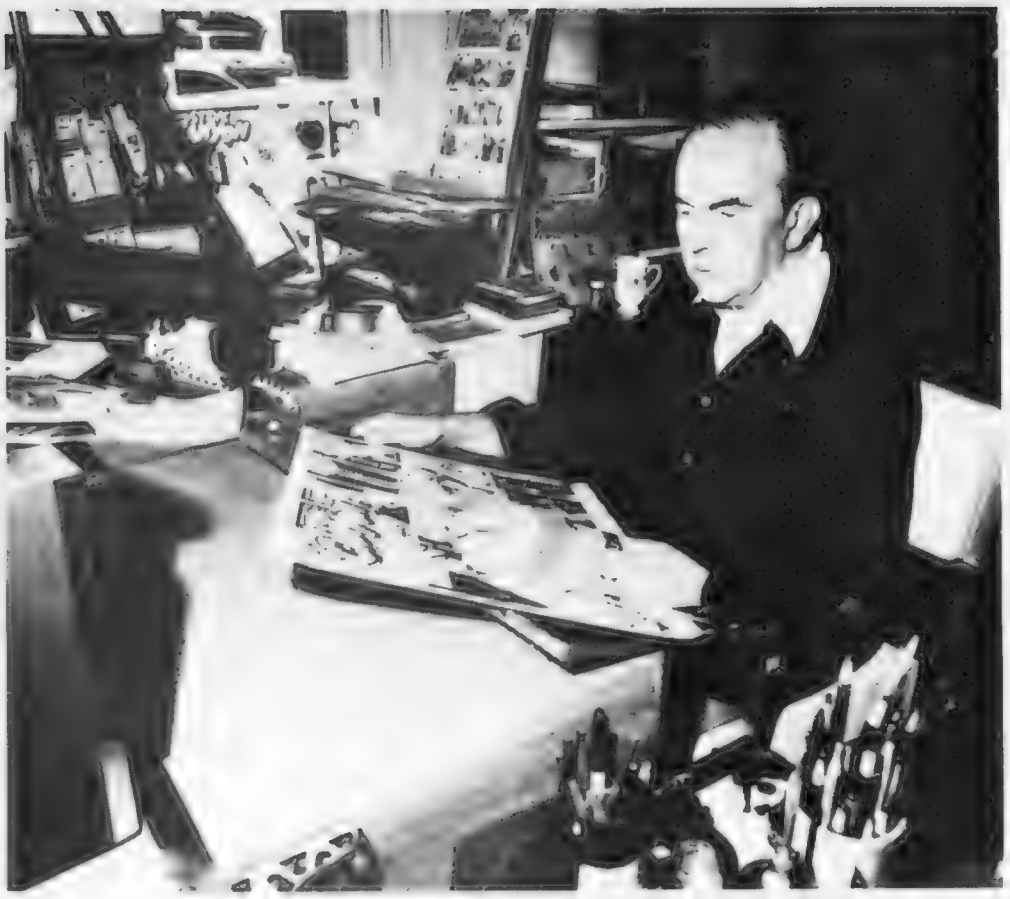
Q: What kind of advice would you give to a young, aspiring comic book artist.

A: My advice would be for him or her to observe everything and remember it. Whatever you are doing, involve yourself. But above all, work like a horse and learn not to sleep.

Q: If you had your way what would you like to do right now?

A: Murals. I know this probably sounds facetious for a mere comic book illustrator; but, I have always longed to be able to do huge murals like the ones Frank Brangwyn or Dean Cornwell did. I would like to do a whole series on the history of California, or the winning of the west, or the industrialization of the eastern states. Why to me, the whole history of the United States offers one of the most beautiful challenges to an artist. That is my dream.

MILTON CANIFF



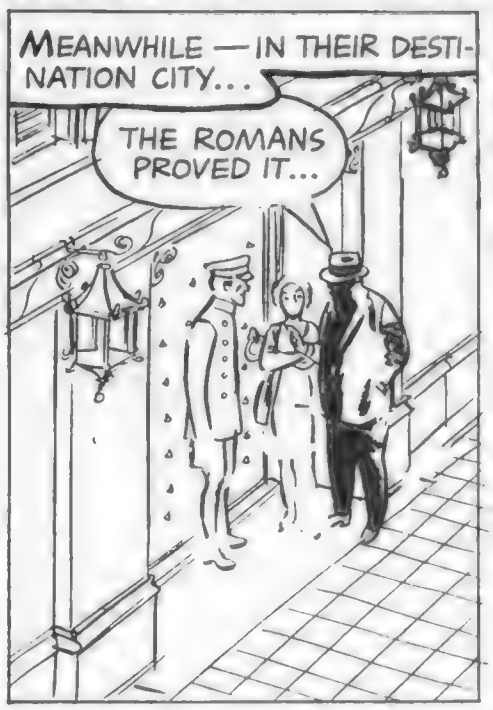
One day, about 3 months ago, MILTON CANIFF was just starting to ink the first panel of the following STEVE CANYON Sunday pages when the Patricia Hearst kidnaping story hit the front pages of the nation's newspapers! Caniff had written the story, thinking that it would be a current one, coming on the heels of the Getty kidnaping in Europe. He made the chief protagonist a girl, figuring that it would be more interesting if something dire happened to her rather than to a boy —as in the Getty case. Milt immediately put down his brush and decided to await further developments in the Hearst case before proceeding.
We'll let him tell our readers what happened after that in his own words. Incidentally, Caniff has been so busy doing a new story line and new Sunday pages to replace the ones included here, which were finally discarded, that he had to tape these comments while on his daily walk near his Palm Springs, California studio, on April 24th.

CANIFF: "I had written King Features and sent them photostats of these half-finished Sunday pages and said I'd be holding up for a week to see how things went. After the week had passed, I knew there wasn't any retrieving of all of this stuff, and that I'd have to go off on a new story line. I kept the syndicate fully apprised of all of this since editors get very nervous when no strips are forthcoming from a cartoonist. As CARTOONIST PROfiles readers will realize after reading the discarded pages (all of which are included here), it would have been embarrassing if the strips had appeared in *any* newspaper but it would have been *unthinkable* to release them in The San Francisco Examiner and the other Hearst newspapers! The elements in the actual case have become so wild that I think I did the right thing—much as I hate to dump nearly completed Sunday pages. It would have been out of key, out of character, out of taste. Of course this is a chance you take when you're trying to be relevant.
"Finding myself in this pickle, fortunately I was able to throw into the breach a sequence involving Poteet Canyon as a third party—to set up the ancient triangle. In the back of my mind were plans to introduce this situation in a future story so I moved it up. Summer had come into an inheritance and, being a compulsive spender, had gone wild. As you've probably noticed in the new Sunday pages which have begun appearing at the time I'm making these comments at the end of April, Poteet, who is now quite a young lady has reappeared to set up that triangle. I was glad that I was able to substitute this sequence because I think it turned out pretty well—of course it hasn't appeared in the papers at this point. By this time I'm almost back to normal schedule—10 weeks ahead on Sunday pages and 5 weeks on the dailies. Incidentally, Jud, this might be a good time to tell your readers about the routine on STEVE CANYON, as you suggested some time ago.

"I take a ruled Sunday page, which Frank Engli has already prepared, rough out in pencil what will be involved as far as drawing is concerned, indicate the wording for the balloons, and then send it off to Frank (in Tucson) who does the lettering—in ink of course. Next, Engli sends the page on to Dick Rockwell (a nephew of Norman) in Peekskill, New York. Dick puts in whatever is necessary in terms of drawing and lays the foundation for everything that's to come later. He does the highly technical stuff—planes etc.—and then inks in some of this background material—and this saves me hours and hours of time! He leaves the background in line so that I can add shadows or blacks, etc. As I've told you before, I want to emphasize the importance of the contribution that these men make to the strip.
"Of course in order to make up for lost time, I had to by-pass some of our usual procedure. I not only had to rewrite the whole story but I had to letter everything myself. I'm a lousy left-handed letterer and anyone who looks at the pages closely will notice the difference from the usual brand. No left-hander can handle lettering in quite the same way as a right-handed cartoonist because you have to start with the last panel first. After you've written it left to right, you have to ink it right to left so you don't really know what you're saying! It gets like Esperanto sometimes! After that I had to start out cold again to do the drawing to illustrate my own story. I'm now sitting at the drawing board doing a set of strips, so the pregnant pauses that you hear on the tape are just me thinking what I'm going to draw next. I'm actually doing brush lines on a set of strips which will appear the week of May 20th. The business of drawing in tight pencil backgrounds, when you haven't been doing it for a while, really catches you up.
"I think the story line in these discarded pages is pretty much self-explanatory but I might make a few comments on the girl character, Horshoffer Jones. Naturally, she's always been called 'Horsey'—she's a very imperious kid who has had no identity, and who's been neglected at school. When it's obvious she's been kidnaped, she's utterly delighted—she realizes that for the first time she has an identity. She's going to *be* somebody! Horshoffer is her mother's maiden name, by the way, and they gave her the name because they wanted to please grandma. However the name *doesn't* please the kid. Incidentally, the name she takes in the guerrilla gang, La Cabala, means a masculine name 'Horse'."

STEVE CANYON
by MILTON CANIFF
WHEW! COL. CANYON IS EDGY TODAY
I THINK HE AND HIS WIFE ARE HAVING MONEY TROUBLES
U.S. AIR FORCE

WHO DOESN'T ?
SLIGHT DIFFERENCE! SHE INHERITED A BIG BUNDLE! NOW HE FEELS LIKE A HOUSE PET NOT ALLOWED TO SIT ON THE NEW FURNITURE!


MEANWHILE — IN THEIR DESTINATION CITY...
THE ROMANS PROVED IT...

DO NOT ABDUCT THE RICH MAN— OR HIS LOCAL MANAGER...
WHO THEN REMAINS—WITH THE AUTHORITY TO PAY THE RANSOM?

THROUGH THIS TUNNEL THE DAUGHTER OF THE YANKEE MANAGER RIDES TO HER DANCING LESSON!
CURVA, YOU WILL LIE IN THE CAR'S PATH

WHEN THE DRIVER STOPS FOR THE 'BODY', YOU HIT HIM — AND WE TAKE OVER THE CAR AND SEÑORITA JONES! ¿COMPRENDER?

¡SEÑORITA! A PERSON LIES IN THE EXIT TUNNEL!
WELL— REMOVE IT!

HOORAY!
I'M BEING KIDNAPPED!
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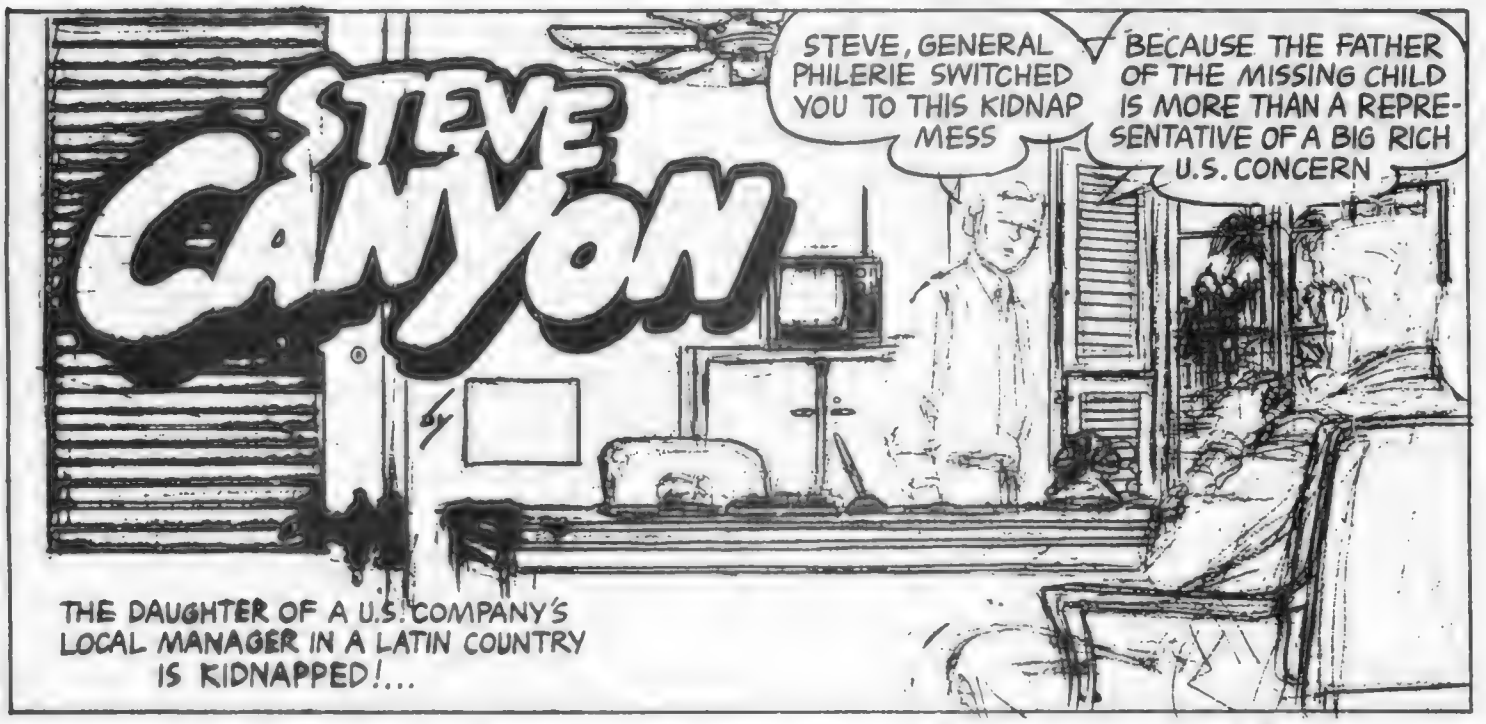
4-14


STEVE CANYON
STEVE, GENERAL PHILERIE SWITCHED YOU TO THIS KIDNAP MESS
BECAUSE THE FATHER OF THE MISSING CHILD IS MORE THAN A REPRESENTATIVE OF A BIG RICH U.S. CONCERN
THE DAUGHTER OF A U.S. COMPANY'S LOCAL MANAGER IN A LATIN COUNTRY IS KIDNAPPED!...

HE WAS ABOUT TO COMPLETE A DEAL FOR AMERICAN MILITARY AIRCRAFT FOR THIS FRIENDLY COUNTRY'S AIR FORCE!
THE OPPOSITION WISHES TO KILL THE SALE!

WHETHER THIS ABDUCTION IS POLITICAL—OR JUST PLAIN OLD GREED, WE DON'T KNOW!
YOU WILL BE THE 'NEGOTIATOR' FROM THE CHILD'S FAMILY!

MEANWHILE...
AM I TO BE DISFIGURED?
WE ARE NOT SAVAGES!

BUT I AM A MASOCHIST! — AND I AM ALSO AN EGOIST
IT WILL BE LESS THAN A STATUS EVENT IF YOU DO NOT CUT OFF MY
YOU ARE REALLY QUITE STUPID, YOU KNOW! I COULD HAVE MANAGED ALL THIS MUCH BETTER!
I AM DE-LIGHTED TO SKIP SCHOOL...
...BUT I DO MISS THE PROGRAM OF MENTAL TORTURE I WAS IMPOSING UPON MY FATHER!
DO NOT DO IT, AMIGO! NO CHILD! - NO RANSOM!
STEVE, THE KIDNAPPERS HAVE FINALLY MADE CONTACT!
IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO TALK MONEY!
I THINK THE FATHER WOULD LIKE YOU TO LEARN...
...HOW MUCH THE KIDNAPPERS WOULD CHARGE TO KEEP THE KID!
© Field Enterprises, Inc., 1974
4-21

STEVE CANYON
THIS IS A SWITCH... STEVE CANYON, THE FLYBOY, WAITING AT THE END OF A BUS LINE...
FOR KIDNAPPERS TO TAKE ME TO IDENTIFY THEIR VICTIM BEFORE RANSOM IS PAID

WELL, THE LOCAL POLICE PLAYED IT STRAIGHT! I'M NOT WIRED WITH A BLEEPER

—AND THEY CAN'T WATCH ME WITHOUT AN INFRARED DEVICE THAT SEES IN THE DARK...

...BUT IF A CAR STOPPED TO PICK ME UP, ITS LIGHTS COULD BE WATCHED FROM A DISTANCE

SO WHAT WOULD BE MORE LOGICAL...

...THAN A HORSE CART ?

¡BUENAS NOCHES, SEÑOR!

POR FAVOR...WE TIE THE HANDS AND FEET—TOGETHER WITH BLINDFOLD

THE SEÑOR MAY PERHAPS ENJOY TO SLEEP!

FOR HOURS THE ANCIENT VEHICLE LUMBERS ALONG—AS STEVE FEELS THE ROAD BECOMING ROUGHER BENEATH THE CRUDE WHEELS...THEN THE CART STOPS

STEVE IS TRANSFERRED TO A MOTOR CAR AND DRIVEN FOR SOME TIME... OFTEN IN LOW GEAR... FINALLY—

¡ESTA BIEN!

BRING HIM INSIDE!

HELLO! I AM HORSHOFFER JONES—THE VICTIM!

THESE CLOWNS WERE FOULING UP THE KIDNAPPING SO BADLY I TOOK OVER—FOR A PERCENTAGE OF THE GROSS!

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STEVE CANYON®

HORSHOFFER JONES, ISN'T THIS A BIG DECISION FOR-AH-SUCH A YOUNG PERSON?

COL. CANYON, I WAS BORN OLD!

STEVE IS BLINDFOLDED AND TAKEN TO THE KIDNAPPER'S PLACE IN THE MOUNTAINS...HE FINDS THE VICTIM IN CHARGE

I WAS FORTUNATE IN BEING KIDNAPPED! NOW I SHALL NO LONGER BE HORSE JONES, THE ODDBALL...

I AM LA CABALLA JONES, QUEEN OF THE GURRILLAS!

MY REIGN SHALL BE FINANCED BY THE RANSOM MONEY MY FATHER'S RICH EMPLOYERS PAY FOR MY RELEASE!

AS YOU KNOW -AH- CABALLA I CAME AS AN OUTSIDER...

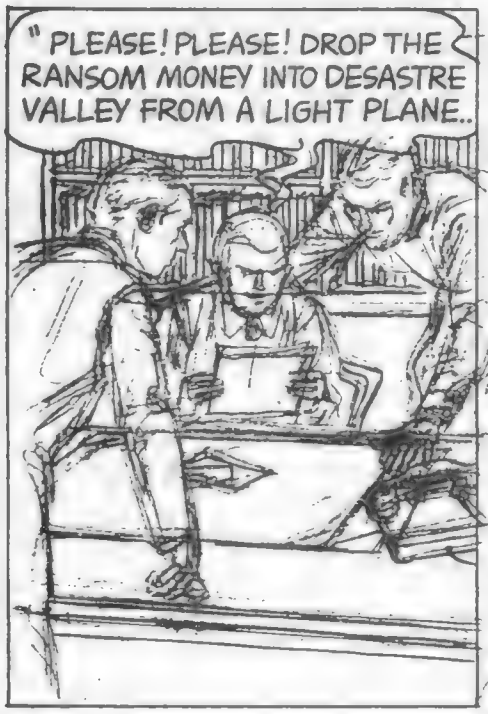
...TO TRY AND ARRANGE FOR YOUR RELEASE!

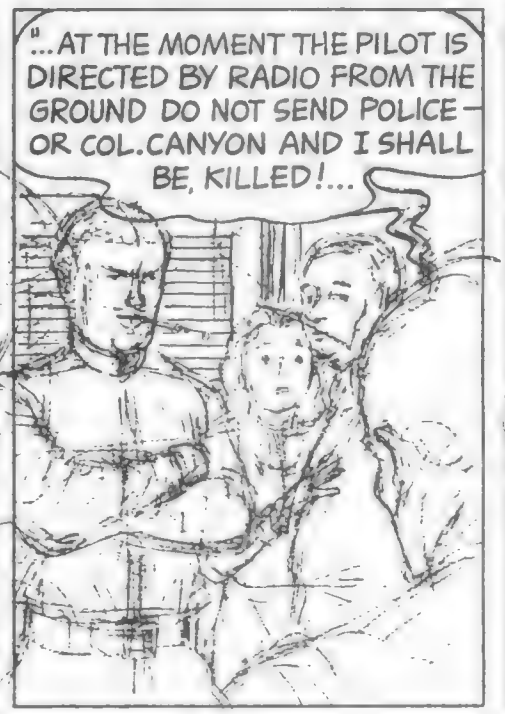
HOW AM I TO RETURN TO YOUR FATHER AND TELL HIM OF YOUR PLANS? INSTANTLY YOU GET NO RANSOM!

I SHALL SEND A LETTER IN MY OWN HANDWRITING, WHICH WILL BRING THE RANSOM CASH

YOU AREN'T GOING ANYWHERE...
BECAUSE YOU SHALL REMAIN HERE—AND BE MY ROYAL CONSORT!
© Field Enterprises, Inc., 1974
5-5

STEVE CANYON
YES, THE NOTE IS IN MY DAUGHTER'S HANDWRITING
WITH SIGNS OF AGITATION IN THE PENCIL STROKES! NO DOUBT THEY WERE TORTURING HER!


" PLEASE! PLEASE! DROP THE RANSOM MONEY INTO DESASTRE VALLEY FROM A LIGHT PLANE..


"...AT THE MOMENT THE PILOT IS DIRECTED BY RADIO FROM THE GROUND DO NOT SEND POLICE— OR COL. CANYON AND I SHALL BE, KILLED!...

"...AS IT IS THEY ARE TORTURING HIM BY SHREDDING HIS CREDIT CARDS AND DRIVING THE PIECES UNDER HIS FINGER NAILS!
—Signed, HORSHOFFER JONES"

WHAT DO YOU THINK ?
DO AS SHE SAYS! —WE CAN'T ALLOW THOSE TWO TO BE TORTURED ANY FURTHER!
MEANWHILE...
LA CABALLA COMMANDS!
AWAKE, SEÑOR CANYON! POR FAVOR!
THE LEADER WILL APPEAR
TA-DAH-H

In Issue #1 of CARTOONIST PROfiles in February of 1969, we printed a number of photographs picturing a day in the very active life of MILTON CANIFF as he worked in his New York City studio and went about town on various errands. Then, several years ago, Milton moved his base of operations to Palm Springs, California, and began a new routine in new surroundings. Recently we asked him for some photos of his California activities and you will see those in our next issue. ●

The Missing "Reuben"

The following story apparently has been told around various barrooms in recent years, and it popped up once again in the April 1974 issue of 'The Cartoonist', the magazine published each year by The National Cartoonists Society at the time of its annual Reuben Awards Dinner. As most of you know, the 'Reuben' is presented to the cartoonist voted 'Best of the Year' by the Society's members. It's a statuette sculpted by editorial cartoonist, Bill Crawford, using Rube Goldberg characters, and it represents a high honor in our profession.

THE STORY

'Here's a tale to tell around the tavern when good cartooners get together. Ronald Searle, the English limner of fanciful frescoes, won the Reuben for 1960. He did not attend the dinner in New York as he was busy shooting grouse or furling his umbrella. Rube was going to Europe that year and offered to surprise Searle and present the statue in person. Rube toted the heavy sculpture aboard ship, through customs in Southampton, thence to London and from there in hired chauffeured car to Searle's palatial digs in Surrey.

Cradling the award in his non-drawing arm, America's most famous cartoonist gave three polite down beats on the massive bronze knocker. After a respectable minute a liveried butler opened the door. Rube announced himself: "Rube Goldberg from America. I've brought the National Cartoonists' award to Mr. Searle".

"One moment, please." The butler shut the door, leaving Rube outside to ponder on British manners.

The front door was again opened by the flunky who cleared his throat, looked down his nose, and said as he took the Reuben from Rube, "Mr. Searle said to thank you for this award. He is sorry, but he is too busy to see you. Good day, sir."

If Searle ever reads this, I wish he'd write and give us his version.'

And since the last line of the story invites Ronald Searle to give his version of the affair, we did just that. Here is his reply, included in a letter we received from him from his home in Paris early in May.

THE FACTS—by RONALD SEARLE

During the winter of 1945 I arrived in London with a grubby portfolio of sketches and found myself a room in a cheap boarding-house in Chelsea. This boarding-house had once been the home of Oscar Wilde and my room had been the library.

Sixteen freelance years later, in the summer of 1961, I took the plane to Paris where I have lived ever since.

In 1960 I was living in Paddington, W.2, which is in central London and not in the county of Surrey. This can be found somewhat further down on the map.

According to the paragraph I received from *"Cartoonist Profiles"* Rube Goldberg came to England that year. I do not remember whether he wrote or telephoned ahead, but he knew where to find me in Paddington and he brought with him an NCS silver plaque. I think it was the Advertising and Illustration Award for 1959. This was our first meeting and we spent a pleasant afternoon chatting until he left belatedly for his next appointment.

At the time of his visit there was an Italian girl living in the house to help with the children. As she was incapable of stringing together more than five English words at a time, we had developed a method of communication consisting of various Anglo-Italian sounds. She was minute and, when she opened the front door of the house to anyone of normal height, she was obliged to look up the full length of her handsome Roman nose, as she did in the case of Goldberg. This front door was made of glass. An undistinguished bell-push, somewhat sticky from toffee-covered fingers, was placed at its side.

These are the facts, admittedly not excessively picturesque, concerning the Goldberg visit.

The NCS "Reuben" award for 1960 was presented at the Lambs Club, New York, on 25th April 1961.

From the end of March 1961 until the beginning of May, I was in the Middle East, ending with a month in Jerusalem, to cover the trial of Adolf Eichmannfor *"Life Magazine"*.

The first news to reach me of the "Reuben" award was in a cable awaiting my return to London. It was from Bill Crawford, then President of the NCS, and had been sent night letter from Brooklyn on May 1st 1961, and delivered by the Paddington post-office the next morning — exactly one week after the Awards Dinner. It read:

RONALD SEARLE 32 NEWTON ROAD LONDON W2 ENGLAND — HAPPY INFORM YOU HAVE BEEN

RONALD SEARLE *Photo by Claudia Desclozeaux-Paris.*

VOTED OUSTANDING CARTOONIST OF THE YEAR 1960 BY 400 MEMBERS NATIONAL CARTOONIST SOCIETY REUBEN TROPHY ACCEPTED FOR YOU BY BRITISH CONSULATE GENERAL OF NEW YORK ALLEN MEREDITH WILLIAMS AT FIFTEENTH ANNUAL AWARD DINNER LAMBS CLUB TUESDAY APRIL 25TH ARRANGEMENT DELIVERY TROPHY BE MADE LATER MY PERSONAL CONGRATULATIONS ALONG WITH THOSE OF MEMBERSHIP — BILL CRAWFORD PRESIDENT +

I am sure that I replied immediately, with suitable expressions of surprise and pleasure.

After a brief turn-around in London I was in New York by May 15th, and was sent around the U.S.A. for two months by Frank Zachary to gather features for *"Holiday Magazine"*.

It was during these two months that my longtime friend and agent John Locke got in touch with the NCS to say that I had arrived in America and would be in and out of New York until mid-July; that I would be most happy to meet and thank whoever had to be thanked for the "Reuben" award which, as a cartoonist (and foreigner to boot), I was absolutely delighted to receive from my American colleagues. As far as I know there was no mention at that point of the statuette for the simple reason that, despite Bill Crawford's cable, I had assumed that there had always been only one Reuben and that its presentation was symbolic.

Only several phone-calls later, when increasing embarrassment became apparent at the NCS and red faces lit the skies of Manhattan, did we understand that the statuette which was presented at the Awards Dinner had been intended for me, but that it had disappeared that evening and had not been seen since.

Does anyone know what happened to it? I have never seen it and despite the inquiries which were made at the time by John Locke, the NCS and the British Consulate, no one has succeeded in discovering "Reuben 1960".

Perhaps it is a pity to spoil the now hoary saga of R. Goldberg and his heartbreaking journey from dear old, safe New York to the perilous wilds of Surrey, England. The heart bleeds at the thought of this pathetic old fellow at journey's end, weighed down by his bronze brainchild (and a monster door-knocker), being refused entrance by a haughty English flunky.

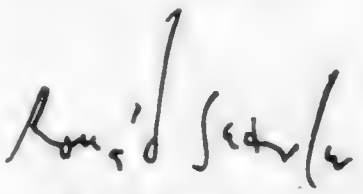
"I am Rube Goldberg! From America!" he cried.

But ears remained deaf. No doubt a surly gamekeeper hurried that frail figure through the massive gates (Bronze. What else?) of the grouse-covered drive, making a final brutish gesture with his umbrella to hasten the departing chauffeur-driven car and uttering uncouth oaths into the rapidly thickening fog until he could no longer be seen. . .

What a pity it is not a good story. It lacks wit, humour and inventiveness. One would have hoped for a higher standard from the cartoon profession. Alas, the ability to draw is not necessarily accompanied by intelligence and imagination.

Anyway — does the story matter? Yes it does, for one reason. On this occasion the NCS chose to give their award to a non-American artist for the first time and it is disagreeable to be accused unjustly and inaccurately of being churlish about it.

And may the story die here.

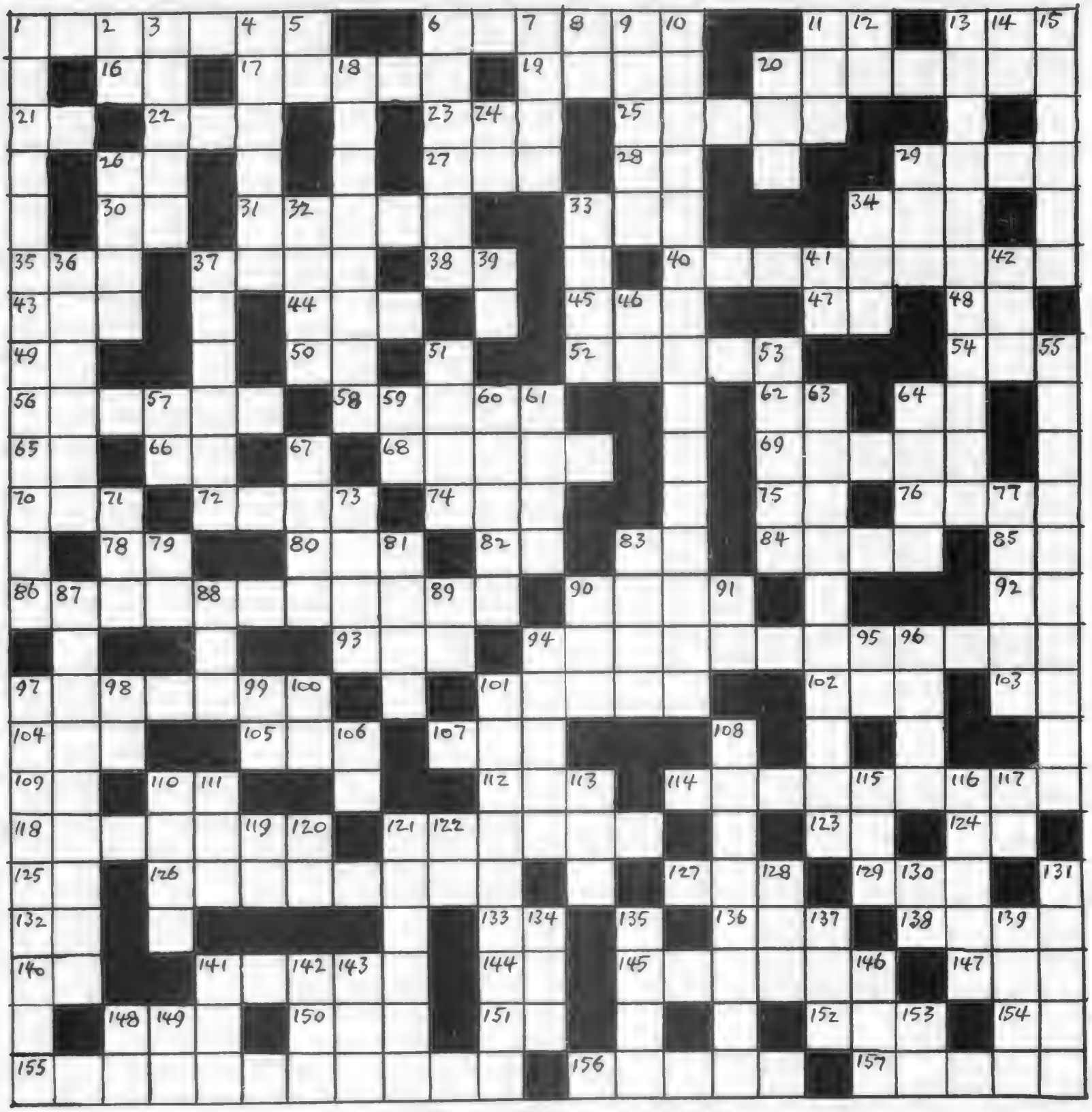


Paris, 4 May 1974

JIM FREEMAN

Our longtime friend, JIM FREEMAN, who was Managing Editor of the UNITED FEATURE SYNDICATE until his retirement at the beginning of this year, still produces the daily crossword puzzle distributed by United. Recently we asked Jim if he felt like cooking up a Cartoonists Crossword for CARTOONIST PROfiles. We're delighted that with all the brainstorming involved in his output for United Features, Jim came through so quickly with the puzzle below.

Solution on Page **59**



Across

1 Charlie Brown, Lucy, Schroeder, et al
6 He made spinach popular
11 Parent (colloq.)
13 Famous British cartoonist
16 Note of scale
17 "_____ an' Slats"
19 Aroma
20 Ham Fisher's champ
21 "The Wizard of _____"
22 Conjunction
23 Poor gag lays an _____
25 _____ Walt
26 Johnny Hart's baby
27 To court
28 Symbol for nickel
29 Eek's pal
30 Railway (abbr.)
31 Little Orphan _____
33. "*Our New* _____"
34 _____ Casson
35 Federal agency (init.)
37 Projecting tooth
38 "_____ and Flo"
40 Roy Crane's creation
43 Raeburn _____ Buren
44 "Ferd'nand" creator
45 Promise to pay (init.)
47 "Hubert" creator (init.)
48 Pronoun
49 Indefinite article
50 Printer's measure
52 Gus _____
54 Initials of "Good Old Days" creator
56 "Grin & Bear It" George _____
58 Gus Arriola's lover boy
62 Part of "to be"
64 Parent (colloq.)
65 Conjunction
66 Pronoun
68 "Mutt and Jeff" Al _____
69 "Out Our Way" Hoople
70 Rear part of ship
72 River in China
74 Vital part of strip
75 Initials of "Off the Record" creator
76 Mr. Soglow
78 Printer's measure
80 Seed Container
82 Knockout (abbr.)
83 Bill of lading (abbr.)
84 _____ Drake
85 Spanish article
86 Howard Post's creation
90 Publishers-Hall chairman
92 Road (abbr.)
93 Robert Dille's syndicate (init.)
94 Creator of The Reuben
97 Chic Young's creation
101 The horrible one
102 Same as 45 across
103 Period of time (abbr.)
104 Away
105 Number
107 Emerge victorious
109 Left hand (abbr.)
110 Roy Dewar's panel
112 Swiss river
114 Stan Lynde's creation
118 Jeff Keate's panel
121 Miss Winkle
123 Senior (abbr.)
124 Initials of "The Born Loser" creator
125 Pronoun
126 Mik's pantomime star
127 "Salesman _____"
129 Mr. Sawyer
132 A state (abbr.)
133 *Behold!*
136 Bridge term
138 "_____ the Tramp"
140 Exclamation
141 "On Stage" creator
144 Preposition
145 The menace
147 Man's nickname
148 _____ Edson
150 Bob _____ of "Jumble"
151 Conjunction
152 _____ Walling
154 Teutonic deity
155 Hanna-Barbera's "_____"
156 "The _____ of Juliet Jones"
157 Pusey's long-frocked _____

Down

1 Hal Foster's creation
2 Capp or Smith
3 Ernie Bushmiller's creation
4 Lord of the jungle
5 Stolen base (abbr.)
6 Jerry Iger's panel
7 Walt Kelly sired him
8 Dodd's nickname
9 Chic _____
10 Creator of "Nancy"
11 Daisy _____
12 "You Know Me, _____"
13 Here Flicklen's cartoon
14 Stamp of approval
15 Mort _____
18 "_____ Up Father"
20 Work at one's trade or thickness of drawing paper
24 Proceed
26 Breakfast cereal
29 Cry of cat
32 Title
33 Mr. Kabibble
34 "_____ Green"
36 "Steve Canyon" creator
37 Walter Berndt's young man
39 Size of shot
41 A state (abbr.)
42 Lamprey
46 Hypothetical force
51 Girl's name
53 Titles
55 "Little Orphan Annie" creator
57 Lois's hubby
59 Bone
60 First creator of "The Katzenjammer Kids"
61 Mr. Soglow
63 Creator of "Emmy Lou"
64 Mr. Mullins
67 Andy or Al
71 Golf mound
73 Midday
77 "_____ and the Pirates"
79 "*Rex Morgan,* _____"
81 The irrepressible Bob
83 Ali _____
87 Hank Ketcham's navy strip
88 Fred Harmon's "_____ Ryder"
89 Initials of "Quincy" creator
90 Embrace
91 Football position (abbr.)
94 Cartoonist _____ Lurie
95 Note of scale
96 "_____ Bunny"
97 "Stoker the Broker" creator
98 Preposition
99 Maiden loved by Zeus
100 Printer's measure
101 Creation of Mort Walker and Dik Browne
106 "_____ and Flo"
108 Al Capp's creation
110 Mutt's pal
111 Mr. Palooka or Mr. Jinks
113 "_____ Kirby"
115 Eye (colloq.)
116 Ted Key's panel
117 Conjunction
119 Chaldean city
120 Touchdown (abbr.)
121 Mr. Whipple
122 Preposition
128 Andy called, "Oh, _____!"
130 Above
131 Carl Anderson's creation
134 Away
135 Unemployed
137 Performed
139 "Harold _____"
141 French *Concorde* is one
142 In music, high
143 Old-time automobile
146 Cry
148 Enlisted man (colloq.)
149 World organization (abbr.)
153 Pronoun

TRIM'S ARENA

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

STAYSKAL

WAYNE STAYSKAL—HAL TRIM

TRIM'S ARENA is a popular sports panel by HAL TRIM who, in reality, is WAYNE STAYSKAL, the editorial cartoonist of the newspaper CHICAGO TODAY. Wayne knew that some newspapers would be using both his editorial and his sports cartoon and he says he didn't want anybody thinking that Stayskal was as frivolous with politics as he was with sports! So for the general reading public he'd rather hide behind TRIM. But he says it's fun to feel like a different person while working on sports. In fact it helps him to shut out his other job so that when he works on TRIM he rarely thinks of Stayskal at all. TRIM, by the way, is his mother's maiden name. TRIM'S ARENA is distributed by the UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE. Wayne and his wife, Helen, have 4 sons — Bob, John, Bill and Dan — and they live in **Wayne**, *Illinois — where else?*

We understand that a book of TRIM'S ARENA cartoons will be published later this year.

Q: Since you were already doing six editorial cartoons a week at the time when you started TRIM'S ARENA, I suppose everyone assumes that you're a super sports-fan.

A: But I'm really not one. I like to watch some baseball on TV and maybe I'll pick up a hockey or a football game near an exciting point without watching the whole thing. And I don't play golf or tennis or hunt, although I do like to get out in the field and knock a ball around with my sons. I guess the reason I'm doing a sports cartoon is that I found myself looking around, a few years back, for some way to burn off some extra energy I seemed to have. At the end of a day spent drawing an editorial cartoon, apparently I had a little more of the creative juices flowing in me someplace, and I started to look for an outlet.

I thought of the various cartoon possibilities and realized that many sports cartoons seemed to lack any really funny pictures. Since I like doing cartoons that have a funny picture quality, and don't merely depend on a gag line for their humor, I began to toy with the idea of a sports cartoon maybe 10 years ago. A few years passed before I did anything seriously about the idea, but finally I finished 24 samples of what I wanted TRIM'S ARENA to be, and showed them to Max McCrohon, who was the Managing Editor here on CHICAGO TODAY at the time. (He's now with The Chicago Tribune.) He liked the panel and wanted to run it right away in our paper but I hesitated because I wanted to see if it had syndicate possibilities first. The Chicago Tribune-N.Y. News Syndicate, which handles my editorial cartoon, already had a sports cartoon and didn't want to sell against themselves. Some other syndicates said, "You just can't sell a sports cartoon!" But, three years ago, I sent it to Jim Andrews and John McMeel, of The Universal Press Syndicate, and they liked 'Trim's Arena' and sent me a contract.

However, I was a little scared when I read that it was a 10-year contract, with an option for an additional 10 years after that! Universal pointed out that when they take on a feature, it's for the long haul, and that they really work at selling it so that everybody will make a profit from the feature. I tried to get the term reduced to 5 years but they said 'No', with the result that we broke off negotiations, and I put the contract in my filing cabinet where it stayed for the next two years.

Then one morning on the train coming in to Chicago, I read of the death of Walt Ditzen who had done a popular sports cartoon

"SOMEHOW I FEEL HE LACKS THE CONFIDENCE OF A HIGH HURDLER."

"FINS!"

for a long time. I guess I figured that now was the time when papers would be looking for another sports cartoonist, so I got out the old contract, signed it, and sent it off to Jim Andrews, saying that I was prepared by now for the 10-year haul and perhaps another 10 stretch after that.

Q: How do you arrange your time between your editorial cartoons and 'Trim's Arena"?

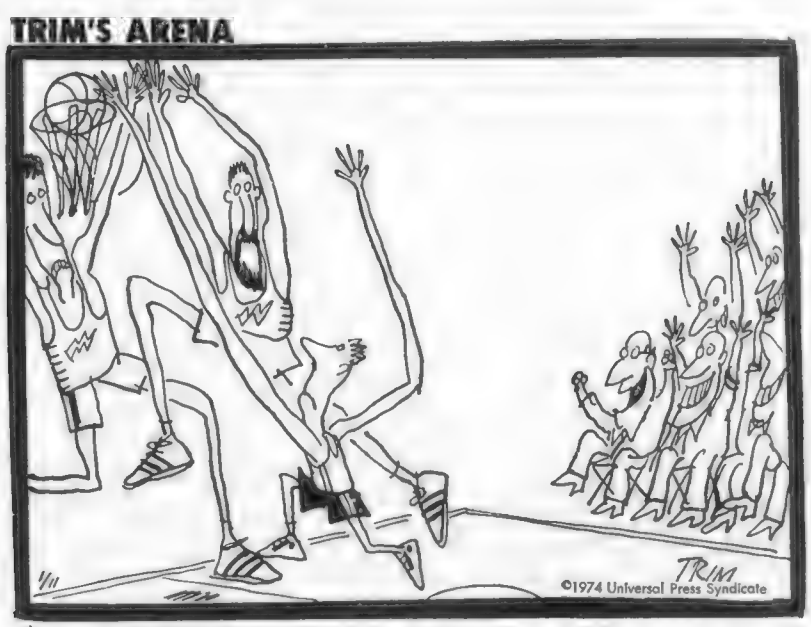
A: I draw 6 weeks of Trim in a 2-week period at home in the evenings and that leaves me 4 weeks during which I can gather material and write some new stuff for the next 2-week drawing period. I have a rather long train ride home from my editorial cartoon job in the evening, and I'll sit there with a pad of paper, pick a sport out of the air to work on, and then brainstorm with myself for ideas. Let's say I pick basketball. I write down the craziest things I can think of having to do with the sport, and even thoughts just remotely allied with it. Sooner or later something pops up and I'll make a little sketch of it—I really don't care if it's the worst idea in the world or not, just so I'm putting *something* down on paper and continually doing so! If I can get about 3 ideas on the train on the way home, at least one of these ideas will generally be good enough to become the *germ* of something usable.

I read some of the newspaper columnists' impressions of the various personalities in sports, what they think about rule changes, etc. Interestingly enough, I find that since I'm not a superfan and consequently don't know too many of the rules, this apparent handicap actually is a help to me as I draw a cartoon or jot down an idea. I'm therefore not thinking to myself, "Gee, this idea is really far out—it couldn't possibly happen because the rules are such and such!" Without this detailed knowledge, I just go my merry way and draw whatever I feel about sports, and I can get as wild as I want without any bells ringing to signal me, "No, no, you can't do that!"

By the way, I'm told by the Universal salesmen that an important factor in 'Trim's Arena' sales has been that the cartoon concentrates on funny drawings, in addition to the gag lines. As I mentioned earlier, we've all seen sports cartoons involving, let's say, two gals playing golf with all the attention having been given to the gag line, and none to having a funny pictorial situation.

Q: Readers always want to hear how a cartoonist arrived at his present position. Could we have a quick rundown on your history?

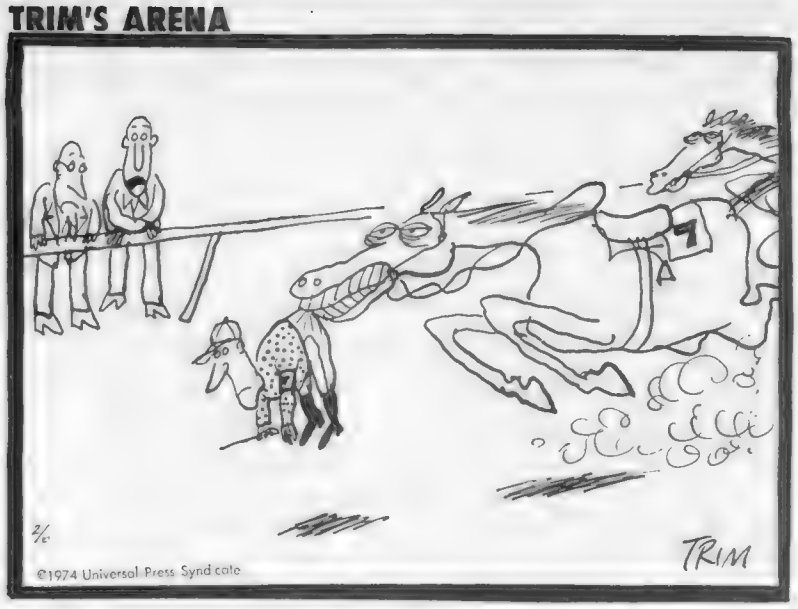
A: I took the cartoon course, and studied under Art Huhta at The Chicago Academy of Fine Arts for 2 years. Various cartoonists came in from time to time and it was very helpful to see how they handled things. During my last year I sent off a lot of comic strips to syndicates and got back a lot of rejection slips, so I decided to abandon cartooning and go into the commercial art field after leaving school. I spent 6 months as an apprentice at one art studio and then did ads and layouts at another one. After that I went to The Chicago American, our predecessor paper, to do layouts for their Sunday Magazine—this was my beginning in newspaper work. Part of the job was doing spot cartoons to accompany some of the columns. This fired me up again on the subject of cartooning and once more I did some strips and panels that didn't work out. Then I began to notice that our paper was the only one



"BOY, LOOK AT THAT LITTLE GUY OUT-MANEUVER THOSE LONG LEGGED SON-OF-A-GUNS!"

"MURTON! A THREE AND A HALF GAINER AT A TIME LIKE THIS!"

TRIM'S ARENA



"FOR SUCH A LOUSY JOCKEY HE SURE WINS A LOT OF RACES."

"GREAT GAME, WALT... YOU SURE WERE RED HOT TONIGHT."

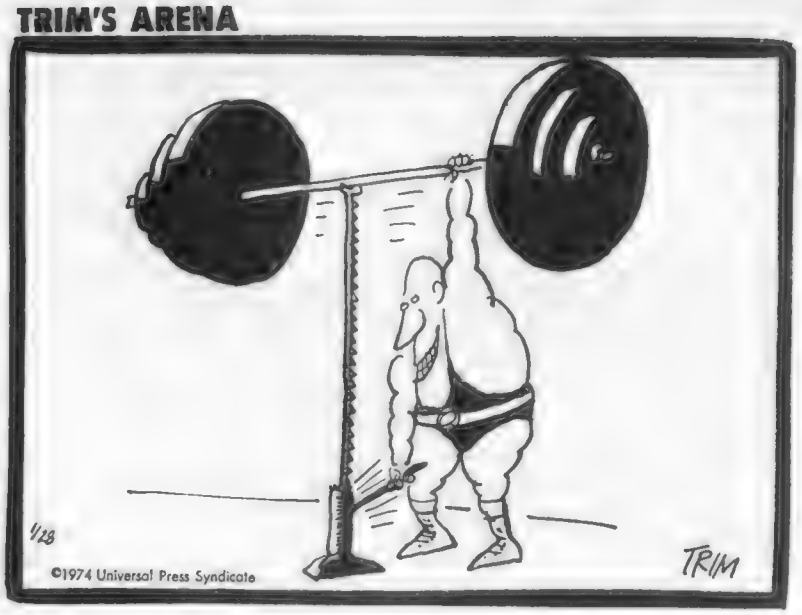
"NOW, HERE'S THE GOLAN HEIGHTS WITH THE SYRIANS DUG IN ABOUT THERE AND THE ISRAELIS..."

Stayskal Editorial Cartoon

"IT HAPPENS EVERY TIME THE SUPERSONICS RACE DOWN THE COURT."

"SENATOR, RUMOR HAS IT THE MILK LOBBY GOT TO YOU."

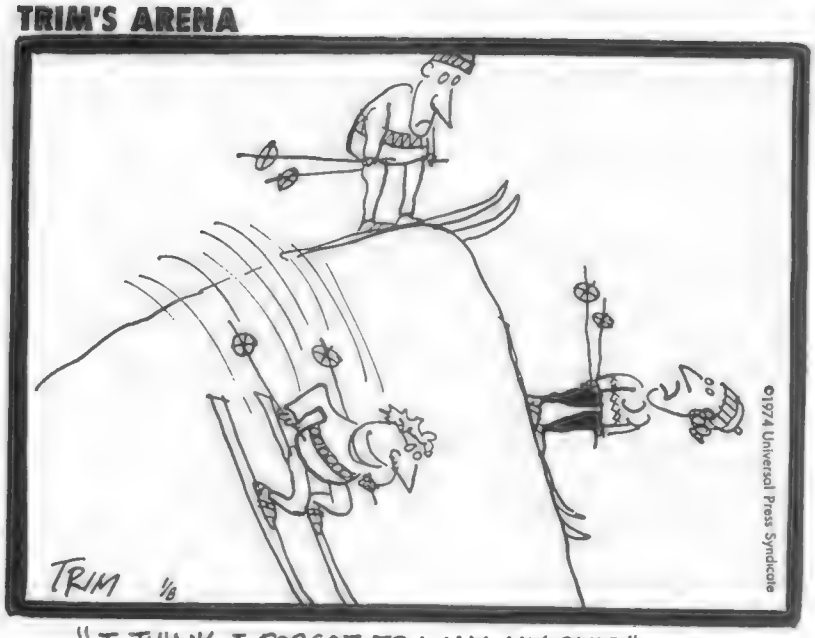
TRIM'S ARENA



TRIM'S ARENA

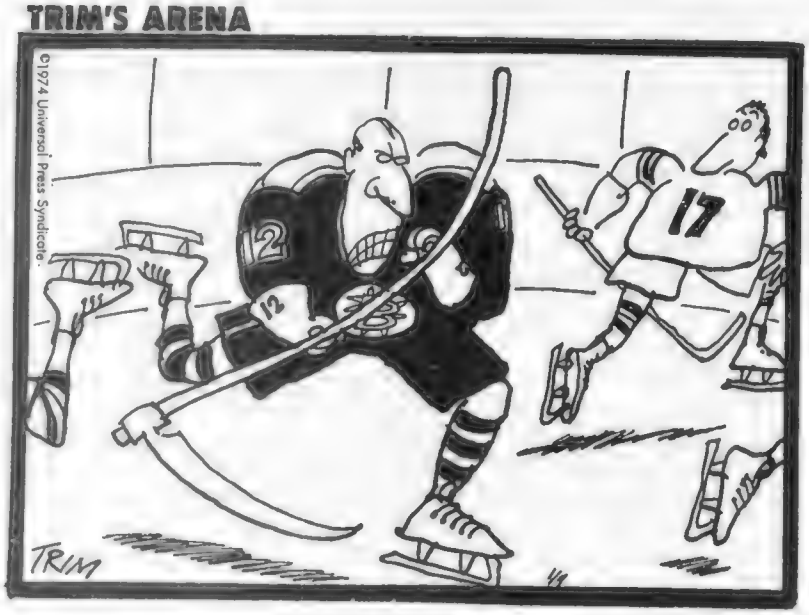
"I UNDERSTAND THERE'S A ROUGH WATER HAZARD ON THIS HOLE."

TRIM'S ARENA



"I THINK I FORGOT TO WAX MY SKIS."

TRIM'S ARENA



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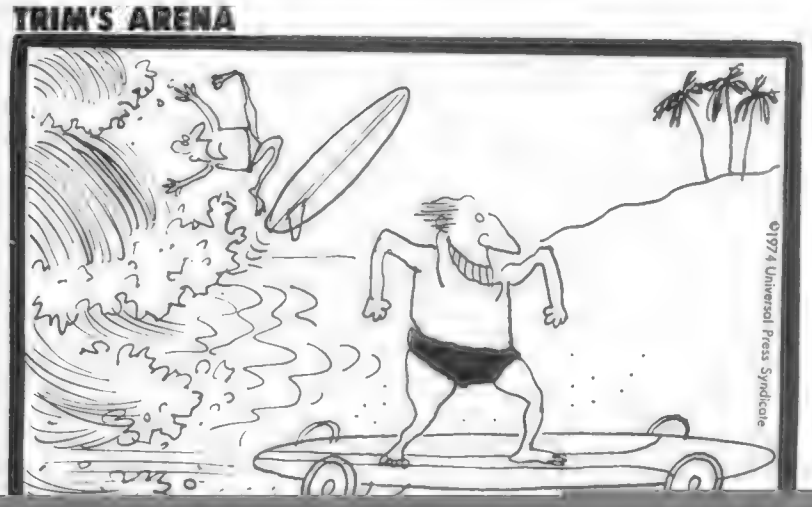
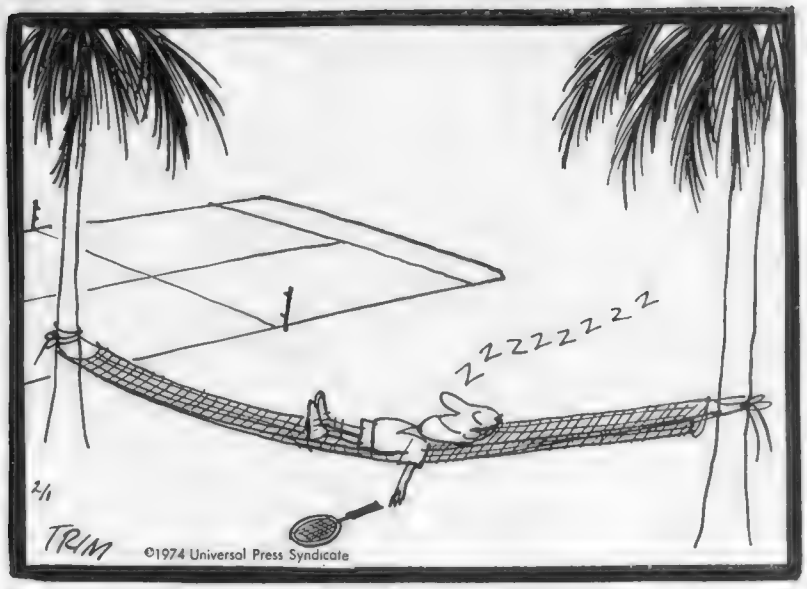
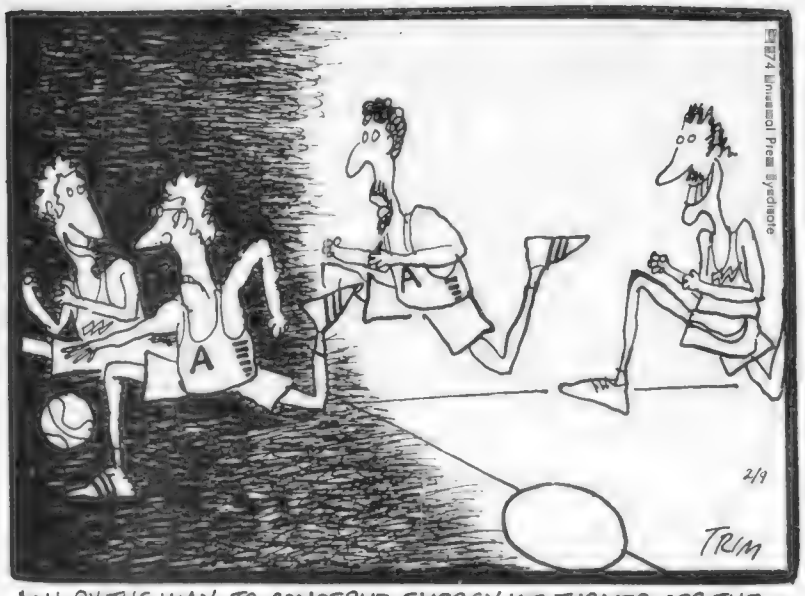


TRIM'S ARENA





"OH, BY THE WAY, TO CONSERVE ENERGY WE TURNED OFF THE LIGHTS ON YOUR SIDE."

"WOW! THAT'S THE FOURTH WORLD'S RECORD SET TODAY!"

in town without an editorial cartoonist on its staff—they bought a couple of syndicated editorial cartoons. The chief editorial writer let me do some editorial cartoons, then everybody in the art department wanted to get into the act, with the result that this experiment was ended. Eventually Vaughn Shoemaker was hired by our paper as cartoonist and I ended up as his assistant, doing a cartoon for Saturday and Sunday while Vaughn produced one Monday through Friday.

One of our editors had been sending my work in to the Bell-McClure Syndicate, (which has since become part of the United Feature Syndicate), without my being aware of it, and eventually they began syndicating 5 of my cartoons a week. We did this for 2 years. Then Shoemaker decided to semi-retire and to cut back to doing 3 cartoons a week for The Chicago Tribune-N.Y. News Syndicate which had been distributing his work. My editor then arranged with Bell-McClure to release me and I began furnishing 3 cartoons a week to go along with 3 of Shoemaker's in a package for The Chicago Tribune-N.Y. News Syndicate

Q: Speaking of 'Trim's Arena', I believe you've said that after you had done several months of them, you began to get the eerie feeling that maybe there were only going to be 100 good sports cartoon ideas in the world, and you felt that you were fast approaching the end of that line. Is that right?

A: Yes, for a week or so I was pretty nervous about the fact that I had 10 years of cartoon production (and maybe an additional 10 years) ahead of me. But, fortunately, I finally came to the conclusion that this business is a one-day-at-a-time thing, and that a creative mind is not all of a sudden going to let you down on ideas.

Q: Do you do all your own gags?

A: No. I started out sincerely feeling that I was going to do all of them myself and not buy any. After 6 weeks of the panel had appeared, gag writers started sending me batches of ideas. For a long time I didn't open their letters and just let them pile up on my desk. I was afraid if I looked at the gags, found nothing usable, and returned them, that sometime I might do something similar and then be accused of stealingsomeone's idea. But my philosophy has changed as I've found that some of these writers send me usable ideas that would have taken me an extremely long time to come up with if ever. So now I'll read anything a gag writer sends me, and I'll accept ideas if they meet the standard I've set. I'm finding, incidentally, very few coming through that I can use as is, and for the most part, I have to rewrite them to fit into the Trim's Arena pattern. Many times I'll get ideas that I can't use at all but I'll buy the gag because from it maybe I can do a twist of my own. And I pay the writer because in all fairness I feel that it was he who gave me the spark of an idea.

Q: What helped you in learning to write humorously?

A: I went to the library and read quite a bit on humor and American wit and got books by Will Rogers and by some of the old comedians who wrote newspaper pieces (people like Benchley for instance), trying to find out what made these guys so very funny without being offensive.

I think I'm a humorist when I'm all by myself and putting things on paper but at a party I'd be the last person to tell a joke. It seems that I don't do anything funny or witty when I'm around people. Incidentally, my Number 1 object in doing 'Trim's Arena' is to entertain sports fans.

Q: Has it been difficult to switch gears between editorial and sports cartooning?

A: No—I try to shut Trim out of my mind as I come down to the paper in the morning. I put on my editorial cartoon hat and on the train I'll read the paper and try to figure what I'm going to do in that line for the day. In editorial work, of course, I'm a little more inhibited than I am with the sports cartoon—in 'Trim' I can draw a little more as I feel, and if I want to draw a real weird-looking character, I can do it.

Phil Love

Here is another column by PHIL LOVE, former Feature Editor of THE WASHINGTON STAR, longtime writer of books and newspaper stories, and producer of the weekly column, LOVE ON LIFE, for the McNaught Syndicate. As you well know, Phil has an endless fund of stories about cartoonists, and it's our pleasure to share them with our readers.

LOVE TO ALL

I was happy to see the attention given to my old friend Bob Baldwin (Rupe) and his "Freddy" strip in No. 21, but he told so little about himself that I think I'd better try to fill in some of the blanks.

Bob first came to my attention back in the late 1940s or early 1950s, I'm not sure which. I was feature editor of the Washington Star, and the art director of our Sunday magazine, Bob Hoke, asked me if I would look at a new comic that a friend of his had drawn. He and the comic artist had been classmates at the Corcoran School of Art.

A few days later, Hoke introduced Baldwin, who wanted my opinion of the strip and advice on where to peddle it. I've forgotten what the comic was about, but I remember telling the artist that I didn't think it would sell. He decided to try anyway, however, as he was home only on a short leave from Okinawa. I gave him a list of syndicate executives and wished him luck.

A year or two or three later, Hoke came to me again and asked if I'd look at another strip by his friend. This time it was "Freddy."

"Now you've got something," I said. "Get on up to New York and show it to King, Post-Hall, McNaught, United, and Bell-McClure in that order. I'm almost sure that one of them will take it."

None of them did, however, and Baldwin found his way to the George Matthew Adams Service and an immediate acceptance by its manager, Harry Elmlark. I bought it for the Star, and Harry sold it to a good list of other newspapers. Ironically, one of the syndicates that had rejected it, Publishers-Hall, was happy to take it over later from the Washington Star Syndicate, which had bought the Adams Service.

"Freddy" quickly attracted a large and devoted readership. Once, when it was left out of the Sunday Star comics section to accomodate an advertisement, there were 85 phone calls that very day—including one to my unlisted home number! It has been on the "must" list ever since.

Bob is extremely shy and conversation with him is invariably one-sided. He doesn't go to parties, doesn't belong to any organizations, and refuses to give chalk-talks. I was amazed that Jud Hurd got as much information out of him as he did.

A bit that Jud didn't get is that the adopted son mentioned in the article is a war orphan. Bob and his wife, Helen, found him in Okinawa.

They're a religious couple, though they never belonged to a church until they were well into their middle years. Their oldest son, Mark, somehow was converted to Roman Catholicism when he was in his teens, and he, in turn, converted them.

Among their friends were Paul Hallett, then drawing a daily panel called "Merry Washington" for United, and his wife, Ruth. The Hallets, born Protestants, had become Catholics together after their marriage, and when Bob and Helen, the latter Jewish by birth, were baptized Paul and Ruth were their godparents.

*

SOMETHING ELSE in #21 that stirred my memory was the piece by Harry Gilburt, retired sales director for United.

I was the third editor that Harry called on with samples of "Peanuts." It had been rejected in Philadelphia and Baltimore, but he still believed in it.

I was all for buying it, but the managing editor over-ruled me; he said the strip was "just a lot of foolishness."

"I have so much confidence in 'Peanuts,'" Harry said, "I'll give it to you free for a month. I need a metropolitan paper to get it off the ground, and you'll have nothing to lose by trying it."

"If we want a feature," the m.e. said coldly, "we'll pay for it."

"All right, pay a nominal price—fifteen bucks," Harry suggested. "After a month's trial, if you still don't like it, drop it; but if you do like it, we'll go up to the usual rate."

I begged the m.e. to accept Harry's offer, but the answer still was no.

I don't know whether the Washington Post bought "Peanuts" at the regular price, paid $15 a week or accepted it free. But the comic is still there—and in several hundred other papers besides.

*

MOST OF THE TIME, I had a free hand in the buying of features, but every once in a while the m.e. would throw a block just to show who was boss.

One of those times was when I wanted to buy "Pogo."

A sports writer, George Huber, had told me: "I've been reading a comic called 'Pogo' to my little boy, and we're both crazy about it. It's only in a New York paper now, but I hear that it's going to be syndicated. Maybe you can find out what syndicate has it and get some samples. I'll bet you'll love it."

He was right. Despite an ingrained prejudice against talking animals, I thought "Pogo" was the best new comic I'd seen in years.

But the m.e. thought otherwise. "It's junk," he said. "Talking animals are passe."

"These aren't animals," I argued. "They're people disguised as animals. If we pass up 'Pogo' and the Post buys it, we'll spend the rest of our lives regretting it."

"I still think it's junk."

In desperation, I had 20 persons read the samples—not just editors and reporters, but advertising and circulation solicitors, secretaries, book-keepers, printers, elevator operators, everybody I could buttonhole—and write a brief comment. The most restrained was "fairly good"; the others included "delicious," "delightful," "hilarious," and "terrific."

"I still think it's junk," the m.e. said, "but since you're so strong for it, I'm not going to be stubborn. If you can persuade Bob Hall president of Post-Hall to hold it for six months, until our contract on So-and-So runs out, you can buy it. But make sure it's 30 days TF."

At this writing, "Pogo" is still in what has since become the Star-News. But, of course, it remains to be seen how it will fare without its creater, Walt Kelly, an authentic genius if I've ever known one.

*

I WOULDN'T WANT you to go away thinking that, as a feature editor, I picked only the best comics. I picked my fair share of flops, and passed up some winners too, but I try not to think about them. And I'm certainly not going to tell you about them.

George Herriman

Photo of George Herriman taken by Editor Jud Hurd at Herriman's home in the Hollywood hills.

by M. THOMAS INGE

Exactly thirty years ago, last April 25, cartoonist George Herriman laid down his pencil for the last time. He had finished sketching out a week's worth of "Krazy Kat" comic strips, but he did not live to ink them. Although the New York Times devoted less than seven inches to his obituary, America had lost its greatest genius in comic art.

Herriman was born August 22, 1880, in New Orleans, the son of a tailor.

According to some accounts, Herriman's father moved to Los Angeles to operate a barber shop. There, young Herriman tried odd jobs, including house painting, until he fell from the scaffolding once too often. In 1897, he sold a sketch to the Los Angeles Herald, who hired him at the salary of two dollars a week, and from that point on he committed himself to cartooning.

After the turn of the century, Herriman moved to New York, contributed cartoons to the humor magazines Life and Judge, and drew political and sports cartoons for the New York World.

A reasonably good caricaturist, there was more social realism than whimsy in his work, and his best known piece was a strongly anti-union political cartoon of August, 1906.

Several early efforts at Sunday comic pages—"Major Ozone's Fresh Air Crusade" (an early ecology-minded comic), "Rosy Posy," and "Bud Smith"—brought him to the attention of newspaper czar Hearst's staff, and he joined them in 1907. His first successful creation was "The Dingbat Family," a middle-class situation comedy in which the Dingbats develop a first-class persecution complex because of an eccentric, noisy family living in the apartment above.

In the very first daily pages from June 20, 1910, a cat was a part of the family group. At the bottom of the panel for July 26, 1910, the cat is hit by a rock thrown by a mouse, and therein was the genesis of Krazy Kat and Ignatz the Mouse. Within a month, the cat and the mouse had a strip of their own at the bottom of "The Dingbat Family," and on July 2, 1911, the first full-sized and independent "Krazy Kat" strip to appear on a regular basis replaced the Dingbats when they went on vacation. By then, Krazy had developed a following of his own, a coterie of admirers whose loyal readership would keep the comic strip in print until Herriman's death over thirty years later.

The world of Krazy Kat was a world of fantasy set against abstract landscapes approximating Coconino County in Arizona.

Within this world was acted out one of the strangest love stories of all time. Krazy loves Ignatz the Mouse, whose sole passion in life is to crease Krazy's skull with a brick. Krazy accepts these as tokens of affection, but the ever-present, benevolent Offissa Pup sees them as the evil things they are intended and, himself in love with Krazy, stands ready to jail Ignatz at the slightest provocation, such as reaching for a brick.

While such love-triangles in which there is no requited affection have many parallels in world literature (Shakespeare made the most intricate use of this pattern in "Midsummer Night's Dream"), this one is made distinctive by the fact that Krazy's sex is ambiguous. Sometimes referred to as a "he" and others as a "she," when pressed on the point by movie producer Frank Capra while both worked in Hal Roach Studios in Hollywood, Herriman replied, "Krazy is something like a sprite, an elf. They have no sex. So the Kat can't be a he or she. The Kat's a spirit—a pixie—free to butt into anything."

There is much that is light-hearted and gay about Krazy's world, in character with such elfishness, yet underlying the action is a deep-rooted sense of determinism and Naturalistic despair, not unlike Theodore Dreiser's world view. Fate, "she who deals her cards from the bottom," and Destiny are frequent witnesses to all that transpires. In many ways, Krazy is another oblivious Sister Carrie afloat on the sea of circumstance in her wooden crate as she sings her favorite song "There is a heppy lend, fur, fur a-way!"

In his richly poetic language, Herriman once wrote, "Be not harsh with 'Krazy.' He is but a shadow himself, caught in the web of this mortal skein. We call him 'cat,' we call him 'crazy' yet he is neither. At some time he will ride away to you, people of the twilight, his password will be the echoes of a vesper bell, his coach, a zephyr from the West. Forgive him, for you will understand him no better than we who linger on this side of the pale."

To the world of comic art, George Herriman was its Picasso in visual style, its Joyce in language, its Beckett in thought. With "Krazy Kat" he reached a peak of achievement in the comic strip that no one else has approached. ●

M. THOMAS INGE, currently a Professor of English at Virginia Commonwealth University, has also taught at Vanderbilt University and at Michigan State, and has been a recipient of two Fulbright grants. Prof. Inge felt that the 30th anniversary of the death of GEORGE HERRIMAN, which occurred on April 25, should not pass without some comment on the career of that cartooning giant.

He's currently writing a biography of George Herriman which will appear in a collection of essays he is editing on major American comic artists.

A beautiful full-color two-volume set reprinting the first 320 PRINCE VALIANT Sunday pages is scheduled for publication this month by King Features Syndicate and Nostalgia Press.

Therefore it seemed timely for CARTOONIST PROfiles to present an in-depth interview with PRINCE VALIANT's creator, Harold R. Foster. Besides his work with PRINCE VALIANT, Hal Foster was the first artist to illustrate TARZAN OF THE APES for newspaper syndication. He has won numerous awards including the National Cartoonists Society's Reuben award for Cartoonist-of-the-Year in 1957.

Bill Crouch Jr. spent a day with Hal and Helen Foster at their Florida home in March. We are pleased this interview contains many biographical facts never before published and sets to rest a number of myths about PRINCE VALIANT that began in books on the history of the comics.

The illustrations selected not only show Hal Foster's artistic achievement with PRINCE VALIANT, but reprint some important events in the saga after page #320. Foster believes the humor he used is often forgotten in favor of violence and adventure when readers think of PRINCE VALIANT.

CROUCH: What's your reaction to this lavish reprint of the first six years of PRINCE VALIANT?

FOSTER: The truth is what you've told me today is the first information I've heard of it, but I'm really pleased. The single request that appears most often in our mail is where can reprints of the early PRINCE VALIANT strips be obtained. Of course Hastings House published seven books that abridged the strip, but these are out of print.

CROUCH: How did PRINCE VALIANT get started?

FOSTER: King Features first approached me because William Randolph Hearst liked my TARZAN artwork so much. They wanted me to do a strip and offered to create one for me. I refused at first because I wanted to create my own. PRINCE VALIANT was the result and I own the strip.

The medieval period gave me scope, that's why I picked it. At first I thought of the Crusades but the theme was too limited. With PRINCE VALIANT I have a leeway of almost three centuries due to the lack of written records. With the decline of Roman civilization in the fifth century, written records ceased being kept.

Photos by Bill Crouch, Jr.

Hal and Helen Foster pose in their backyard. The couple met in Winnipeg, Canada and were married in 1915. An idealized version of Mrs. Foster served as his model for ALETA in the PRINCE VALIANT saga.

just got a letter from a German fellow asking the same thing. In truth the story of PRINCE VALIANT fighting Attila the Hun and World War II happened

cut, I sold my reference library. Sometimes I miss it, but after all these years of doing PRINCE VALIANT I'm able to get along without it.

When reading fantasy and about the medieval period, sometimes just a phrase or word will give me the idea for a plot. Then I enlarge it into an adventure. I use real people in my strip too. For example a waiter
in a restaurant in Europe was transformed into a comical squire for Sir Gawain. I've traveled everywhere PRINCE VALIANT has adventured except the Middle East and Africa.

When writing a comic strip it's very important to have names that fit your characters. Many years ago a friend sent me a long list of the medieval version of Norse names and it's been a big help.

The hardest thing in writing the PRINCE VALIANT saga has been to keep VAL human. He has to be good and virtuous, but I try and keep him human also. He has faults and frailties like everybody else.

CROUCH: Besides writing are you currently doing other work on PRINCE VALIANT? Also how did you select John Cullen Murphy to take over the artwork on the strip?

FOSTER: Besides writing PRINCE VALIANT, I personally color the stats which are now tabloid size. Unless you have something to do you can't retire and enjoy yourself. I really have not retired. Merely I've made a few concessions to age.

Until I was 78, I worked a 53 hour work week on PRINCE VALIANT.

I tried out one or two illustrators before I decided on Jack Murphy. For about a year Jack did backgrounds and then I let him start to sketch in the main characters. I'd admired his sports illustrations and artwork on BIG BEN BOLT and so requested he come up and show me his stuff. That's how we got started. I'm extremely pleased with his work on PRINCE VALIANT.

When new characters are introduced I send a rough sketch of the face so Jack will know exactly what I want and write him a description of the character's personality. Also I take a letter size piece of paper and rough out how many panels I think the page should be broken into. However Jack does all the artwork. We collaborate mostly through the mail.

CROUCH: When you did the artwork yourself, what was your schedule? Would you also please tell our readers how you approached drawing the human figure and also designing the layout of the strip?

FOSTER: I'd go to my studio about 9 a.m. and work through until 5:30 with a break for lunch. My schedule was seven days a week including most holidays.

In drawing the human figure, I started with the outline of the body for proportion and then dressed the figure. The result of all my years of studying art in Chicago is that I can visualize the human body and don't need a model to work from. Back then I studied the body from the skeleton out. I thought I was going to medical school.

I never did roughs on separate pieces of paper. I'd just sketch it out using a Venus HB pencil. Before the comics shrunk I used to work on a 27 x 34 piece of 3-ply Strathmore with a kid finish. Now the originals are down to 16½ x 24 inches. It was a pleasure to work in that larger size. Now that it's smaller I'm sort of glad I'm not drawing it.

I used the background to show time and place. The trees, architecture, and landscape differ all over Europe. It would take about three panels to do any sort of panorama effect. The shrinkage of the size PRINCE VALIANT is printed has all but removed the panorama from reality as a tool available to use.

I use Higgins ink and for the delicate work a Windsor Newton #2 brush. Then for fine detail I like a #170 Gillott pen. For coloring Windsor Newton watercolors are my favorite. I used the color to either bring figures out or place them in the distance.

It's true I've brought traditional art and illustration technique to the funnies but it wasn't done consciously. This has always been my style. Some people dissect their art in formal terms but I've never done that with my work.

One think I know nothing about is those queer machines that people use to copy everything from photos. Somehow that type of artwork looks just too perfect.

I used to have an assistant on the coloring in the past. And for backgrounds I've had two different assistants over the years. Once my son worked with me for awhile.

PRINCE VALIANT has never been work for me. I always felt I was doing something that was essentially mine and part of me.

CROUCH: PRINCE VALIANT was first published when you were 45. Most people only know of you in terms of syndicate publicity blurbs, would you please fill our readers in on your early years?

FOSTER: When PRINCE VALIANT began King Features asked me to write a biography. I did but it was done tongue-in-cheek. They took it for gospel.

I was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia on Aug. 16, 1892. My father died when I was four and in 1906 my stepfather decided to move the family to Winnipeg. He'd gone bankrupt and wanted to try and rebuild his fortunes in the western land boom.

My official biography has me a trapper at age 14. I'll tell you about that. My mother, brother and I spent one winter at a hotel in Elmsdale, Nova Scotia waiting for the word to move west. There was nothing to do so my brother and I trapped and hunted. However, there's little romantic about two kids trapping rabbits and shooting partridges.

My formal education with the exception of art school stopped at the ninth grade. Back then education was very different than now. You were supposed to get education as you got experience.

Mostly I self-educated myself by reading books from Winnipeg's Carnegie Library. My chief inspiration was a nasty remark by an aunt whom I thoroughly disliked. She told my mother, "Isn't it too bad Harold won't get an education." We were really poor at the time. So I looked at the old biddy and said, "The hell I won't."

I started to draw and when I was about 16 I'd stand nude in front of a mirror and sketch myself until I'd turn blue from the cold. We couldn't afford many luxuries at the time.

At first I thought office work would be good when I took a regular job. But it interfered with my hunting and fishing, especially in the fall. Winnipeg was a small town and just outside you could get prairiechicken and there were pike for the catching. Also in those days your hunting and fishing made an important part of the family food budget.

My first art job was with the Hudson Bay Company in Winnipeg. I was 18 and worked illustrating their catalog. I specialized in men's fashions. After awhile I got pretty good at catalog illustration and decided I needed a formal art education.

CROUCH: Weren't you married by this time?

FOSTER: Yes, I got married in 1915. Mrs. Foster was born in Topeka, Kansas. When we moved to the United States in 1921, the U.S. government made her pay a $9 head tax because she'd married a Canadian. She was furious. I've since become a United States citizen. We have two sons and many grandchildren including two girls named Aleta.

CROUCH: Why did you move to the United States?

FOSTER: By 1921 my situation was such that I'd reached the peak in Winnipeg as an illustrator. So I talked another fellow like myself into bicycling the 1,000 miles to Chicago. This was on old one-speed bicycles.

They weren't nearly fast enough to keep ahead of all the dogs. The worst thing on the whole trip was the vicious dogs. We got so we could kick the

teeth out of a farm dog with one stroke. The roads weren't paved then either. It took us about 14 days. I'd never been to Chicago but it seemed the place to go. Of course I had done canoe trips, camping, prospecting and the like, so sleeping in haystacks and barns was no hardship. Around Grand Forks, a big storm hit and we saved a couple of days by hitching a ride on a milk train.

When we got to Chicago we put up at the YMCA hotel and were robbed within an hour. We had put on our raincoats and gone for a shower. We didn't notice the guy leaving the shower as we entered. But he took our keys and stole all our money. Then he threw our keys in the room through the transom.

Luckily I'd left an emergency fund in Winnipeg with Helen. So I telegramed. It was just about Aug. 28, 1921 and our wedding anniversary and she was so pleased to get a telegram until she opened it. It read, "Help — send emergency fund."

I visited Chicago studios to see what work was needed. Helen and the two boys moved to Topeka and lived with her grandparents until I got work. I got a job with Jahn & Oliver Engraving Co. and began studying on and off at The Art Institute and Chicago Academy of Fine Arts. It was the heyday of advertising art and I would compare other peoples work with my own. Then I'd go to school to learn what I didn't know how to do. This was in the period from 1921 through 1930. I was associated with Palenske Young, one of the better Chicago studios. My best accounts were Northwest Paper, Jekle Margarine, and covers for Popular Mechanics, Southern Pacific and Illinois Central Railroads.

CROUCH: You began illustrating TARZAN at the same time as the Depression. How did that come about and did it take the slack out of what were lean years for many artists?

FOSTER: That's right. In 1929 the Depression came and all advertising illustration stopped for awhile. I witnessed three suicides in downtown Chicago. In one case the man fell nine floors and landed just outside the window in the restaurant where I was having lunch.

During the 1920s, everything had looked grand. I'd invested in stock like everybody else and was whipped out too. Only in the last couple of months a couple of these stocks have come back.

The idea to illustrate TARZAN OF THE APES was Joseph Neebe's. He was in advertising and knew my work. He had the idea of a series called Famous Books and Players. TARZAN was the first book he wanted drawn. It was published by Grosset & Dunlap in 1929 and then was used in the newspapers for about 10 weeks.

Then I went back to advertising work and Rex Maxon was given TARZAN daily and Sunday. I never met Maxon.

A small room in Hal Foster's home serves as his studio. Here he writes PRINCE VALIANT and colors the tabloid-size photostats of the art. Hanging in his studio but not in the photo is a humorous watercolor given him by Milton Caniff. It depicts a cartoonist in medieval costume working at his drawing board. A jester prances in the foreground. But poised behind him is an ominous hooded executioner with black hood, gleaming axe, and the label "Deadline."

However, this schedule proved too much work for him and Joe Neebe wanted me to do the Sunday TARZAN.

At first I didn't want to do it. I thought I was prostituting my art doing TARZAN and being a funny page artist. Then I realized it was the Depression, I had a family and I was hungry.

I did the SUNDAY page of TARZAN from 1931 until I started PRINCE VALIANT. I was also doing advertising work and so at first was just about scratching out the TARZAN page. Then I started getting fan mail for the first time.

I had been exhibiting in galleries and museums in Chicago before the Depression and when I stopped nobody said anything. So when the fan mail on TARZAN started to come in it really built up my conceit. I suddenly realized the comics page gave pleasure to millions and changed my attitude about just scratching out the artwork. Helen helped me control my inflated ego.

Doing TARZAN was never boring.

The art was always a challenge, but I thought some of Edgar Rice Burroughs' stories were silly and some of the writing sloppy.

I'd receive captions and between them a block of description and drew TARZAN from that. Almost all my TARZAN work was handled through the mail.

CROUCH: How did you name PRINCE VALIANT?

FOSTER: I didn't think up the name PRINCE VALIANT. It was thought up by Joe Connolly who was general manager of King Features at the time. At first my wife and I thought it was too blatant. We thought Arn sounded good. It was a good Saxon-Norman name but the syndicate rejected it. Of course the public immediately accepted PRINCE VALIANT and the name seems natural now.

CROUCH: Most cartoonists draw themselves somewhere into their strips. Did you ever draw yourself into the background of PRINCE VALIANT?

FOSTER: I hate to admit this. I used myself in an idealized version as the model for PRINCE VALIANT. I deleted what I disliked and he's sort of my body with muscles. He's all the things I would have loved to have been. The haircut was simply designed in a traditional cut. It was padding for the helmet. However, it's been the single most famous thing from the strip. I made him have black hair because it would show up more prominently when reproduced. After all his mother was a Roman woman that had married King Aguar. PRINCE VALIANT has sort of a Roman nose. Besides, you always think of a blond in terms of a beautiful woman.

I idealized my wife Helen into ALETA. My wife's wonderful and keeps me in perspective. We spent our honeymoon canoing a lake in Canada that no other white woman had ever seen at that time.

CROUCH: During part of the 1940s, THE MEDIEVAL CASTLE appeared at the bottom of PRINCE VALIANT. Would you please tell us a little about that strip.

FOSTER: Well, then like now there was a paper crisis and all comic strips had to cut back because of regulations. Well we didn't want to lose the full page format for PRINCE VALIANT and this was how we were able to keep it intact. THE MEDIEVAL CASTLE was later published as a book and did very well in schools and libraries.

CROUCH: How has PRINCE VALIANT weathered your "semi-retirement" and the newsprint crunch?

FOSTER: The circulation of the strip has always been very good, but I am sad to see it shrunk down from a full page to even I hear maybe a third of a page in the future. Whenever a paper drops PRINCE VALIANT I'm happy to say that the fans descend upon them. For example, the Washington Post once dropped the strip and the readers were so upset and told them so that the newspaper reprinted in black and white all the strips they'd missed when PRINCE VALIANT was reinstated. This is definitely the roughest period ever for syndicated strips though.

I numbered the PRINCE VALIANT pages and myself drew through #1788. People immediately noticed that my name wasn't in the bottom panel and some wrote and said they'd never read it again. It seems common knowledge that Jack Murphy is doing it even though he's never signed his name.

The comic strip nuts all get together like a religious cult and I was getting upset by all this. However the people at King Features told me to forget about it that they didn't buy the strip, newspaper editors did. I was apprehensive and prepared to see circulation go down. However, that didn't happen. Now the mail is very pleasant and everything has worked out very well. I'm even getting a little jealous.

I've noticed over the years that hands are more expressive than faces. Hands can take so many positions that can express emotion. They're Jack Murphy's strong point.

CROUCH: Do you have any comment on how the public sees and interprets PRINCE VALIANT?

FOSTER: People think if they can draw they can be a cartoonist. That's wrong. A real cartoonist needs writing ability and a formal education in drawing.

I've always thought it important to let my stories flow. I alternate adventure with three or four pages of human stuff and humor. Then I return to action, adventure and violence when it's part of the plot. There's a terrific amount of family humor in PRINCE VALIANT that I think many people have missed. They read it and forget it in favor of the violence and adventure.

CROUCH: Do you regularly read the funny pages yourself?

FOSTER: I certainly do, but in truth I enjoy the humor better than the adventure strips. The humor strips rule the comics today. I like the more traditional and don't care much for DOONESBURY and the more topical strips. I always read PEANUTS, TUMBLEWEEDS, BROOMHILDA, and HAGAR THE HORRIBLE. When HAGAR decides to invade Thule, I may have to sue for plagarism. I'm kidding of course.

CROUCH: What do you think is the future of the comics?

FOSTER: Because people like something visual I think the comics will hang on. Changes in environment cause changes in taste and I think we'll all have to live simpler lives in the future. We're using up our world and replacing nothing. Oil's just the first shortage. Man it seems to me has made no plans for the future.

CROUCH: Do you have any superstitions?

FOSTER: Just one, that goes back to my days of hunting and fishing. We'd set up our tent and then go out and mix a drink and face north to toast the Red Gods the Indians worshipped. At first it was a joke but now we take it seriously. One time we were driving along and got into a terrible storm so we pulled over, filled a drink, held it level with our eyes and toasted the Red Gods. The skies cleared and we've been very careful about how we drink to them ever since.

Photos by Bill Crouch, Jr.

Prince Valiant

IN THE DAYS OF KING ARTHUR

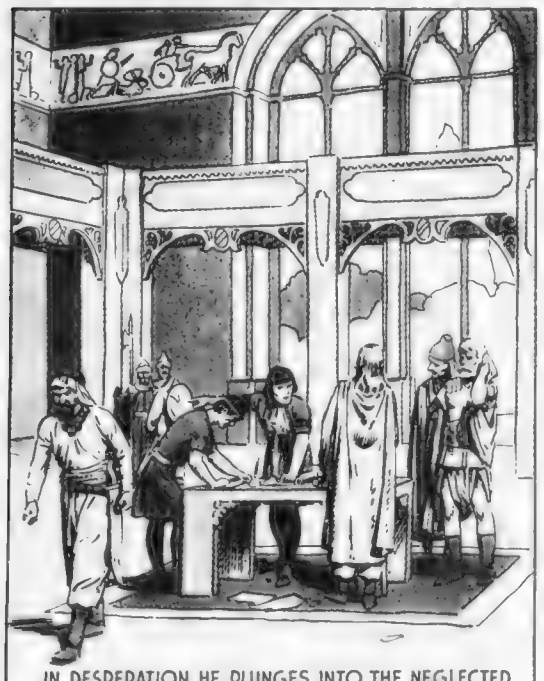
BY HAROLD R FOSTER

Synopsis: NOW, PRINCE VALIANT HAD JOURNEYED HALF-WAY ROUND THE WORLD TO STEAL QUEEN ALETA FROM HER THRONE. THEY HAD ADVENTURED ACROSS SEA AND DESERT IN THE BEST ROMANTIC FASHION. FOR HER HE HAD RUINED A PROUD CITY AND SLAIN AN EMPEROR.....AND THEN SHE REFUSES TO MARRY HIM!

"I WISH," SAYS VAL FOR THE TWENTY EIGHT TIME, *"THAT I KNEW MORE ABOUT THE WAYS OF QUEENS!"*

HE ARGUES HIS CASE WITH ALL THE LOGIC OF A SENATOR, BUT THE SMALL KEEPER OF HIS HEART ONLY SMILES AND FIXES HER HAIR IN A NEW WAY. THIS DOMINEERING BOY IS GOING TO LEARN TO MAKE LOVE OR DIE A BACHELOR!

VAL RAGES; ALETA SINGS HIM LITTLE SONGS. HE TRIES TO BULLY HER; SHE LAUGHS AT HIM. HE SULKS; SHE LOLLS IN THE MOONLIGHT WHILE HER MUSICIANS PLAY SOFT MUSIC.



IN DESPERATION HE PLUNGES INTO THE NEGLECTED AFFAIRS OF STATE AND IN SHORT ORDER HAS THE CAPTURED CITY ORGANIZED, HIS CAPTAINS WORKED NEARLY TO DEATH AND HIMSELF EXHAUSTED.

"....AND NOW" HE ROARS, *"WILL YOU COME TO THULE AS MY BRIDE OR SHALL I RETURN YOU TO THE MISTY ISLES?"* *"OH! YOU GORGEOUS BULLY!"* SHE SQUEALS AND LAUGHS UP AT HIM WITH SUCH SWEET IMPUDENCE THAT HE MUST EITHER KISS OR KILL HER!

INSTEAD HE TOSSES HER INTO THE FISH POND!

THE SHINING YOUNG FACE COMES TO THE SURFACE. THERE IS SURPRISE IN THE GREAT GREY EYES...AND A QUEENLY TEMPER NOT FAR BEHIND. VAL MUST LEAVE IMMEDIATELY FOR DISTANT PARTS OR-.....

HE STEPS INTO THE POND AND KISSES THE ADORABLE FACE WITH SUCH TENDERNESS THAT HER ANGER EVAPORATES.

THEREUPON, AND WITHOUT ANY RESERVATIONS WHATEVER, HE PLACES HIS HEART IN HER TWO SMALL HANDS TO KEEP FOREVER. (AFTER AN HOUR'S WHISPERING, ALETA, AT LAST, SAYS "YES").

NEXT WEEK — **Of Wars and Weddings.**

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Prince Valiant

IN THE DAYS OF KING ARTHUR

BY HAROLD R FOSTER Registered U. S. Patent Office

Synopsis: ONCE UPON A TIME, WHEN KING ARTHUR WAS RIDING HOMEWARD FROM HUNTING, HE DREW REIN AND, WITH A LOW WHISTLE, DISMOUNTED. IVORY SHOULDERS AND GOLDEN HAIR DO NOT, AS A RULE, ADORN EVERY LIMPID POOL IN THE FOREST. HE ADJUSTS HIS CAP, SMOOTHES HIS BEARD AND GOES TO INVESTIGATE.

ALETA IS PREPARED FOR ALMOST ANY SURPRISE IN THIS SURPRISING LAND, BUT NOT THIS ONE. *"HOW DARE YOU?"* SHE CRIES FROM BEHIND THE SHIELD OF HER BRIGHT HAIR. *"GO AWAY, YOU GRINNING OAF!"*

BUT HE STANDS THERE ENTHRALLED. ALETA DIVES AND, SWIMMING UNDER WATER, REACHES THE PROTECTION OF THE TALL RUSHES. THE KING FOLLOWS ALONG THE BANK .....FOR KINGS ARE NOT TAUGHT TO OBEY.

NOR ARE THEY TAUGHT TO DODGE WET MUD. SO THIS PARTICULAR KING RETIRES IN DEFEAT BEFORE THE BOMBARDMENT, LEAVING THE FIELD OF BATTLE TO HIS THOROUGHLY ENRAGED OPPONENT.

"I HAVE HAD A MARVELOUS ADVENTURE!" ROARS THE KING. *"THIS VERY DAY AND IN A FOREST NEARBY, I ENCOUNTERED A WATER-NYMPH. BY MY BEARD, NOW CAKED WITH THE MUD SHE HURLED AT ME, I SWEAR SHE WAS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL CREATURE EVER TO PLEASE HUMAN EYES!"*

"POSSIBLY SHE WAS A WATER GODDESS CONJURED UP BY MERLIN'S SORCERY....." THE KING IS SAYING WHEN ALETA, PASSING BY, RECOGNIZES HIM.

THE SHOCKED KNIGHTS STAND BACK, AWED. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO INTERRUPT ALETA TO TELL HER WHO HER VICTIM IS. AND THE KING? ALTHOUGH A MARRIED MAN FOR MANY YEARS, NEVER HAD HE EXPERIENCED A SCOLDING SUCH AS THIS!

483 5-12-46

VAL APPEARS, ANXIOUS TO SAVE HIS KING. *"YOU STAY OUT OF THIS, DARLING,"* SAYS ALETA. *"I STILL HAVE A LOT TO SAY TO THIS SOILED, SPOILED FLIRT!"*

"I FEAR IT IS OUR KING YOU HAVE SOILED AND ALMOST SPOILED, MY DEAR," WORRIES VAL.

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FOR A MOMENT THERE IS A HUSHED SILENCE. THE GREAT KING DRAWS THE REMNANTS OF HIS DIGNITY ABOUT HIM AND FROWNS DOWN. BUT BEFORE HE CAN SPEAK, THAT IMPUDENT, INFECTIOUS GRIN LIGHTS ALETA'S FACE. *"I AM SURE, YOUR MAJESTY, WE WILL BE GOOD FRIENDS..... AND IT WILL NOT BE NECESSARY FOR ME TO SPEAK TO QUEEN GUINEVERE ABOUT YOUR PHILANDERING."* NEXT WEEK—**A Queen is envious.**

37229

Prince Valiant

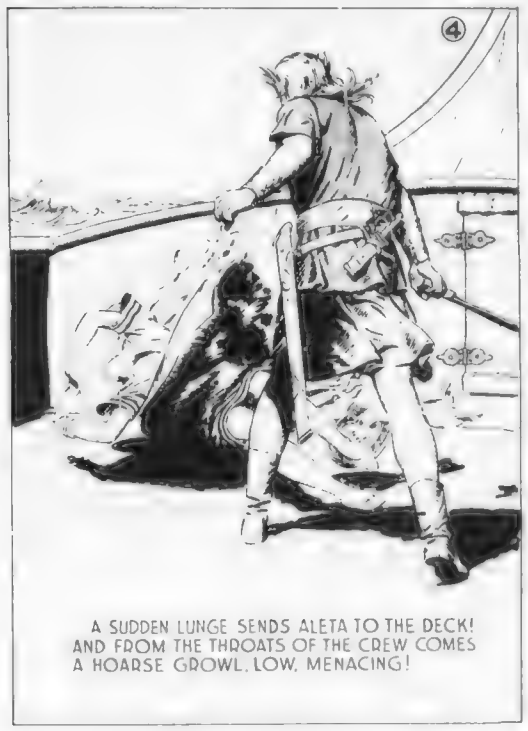
IN THE DAYS OF KING ARTHUR

BY HAROLD R FOSTER

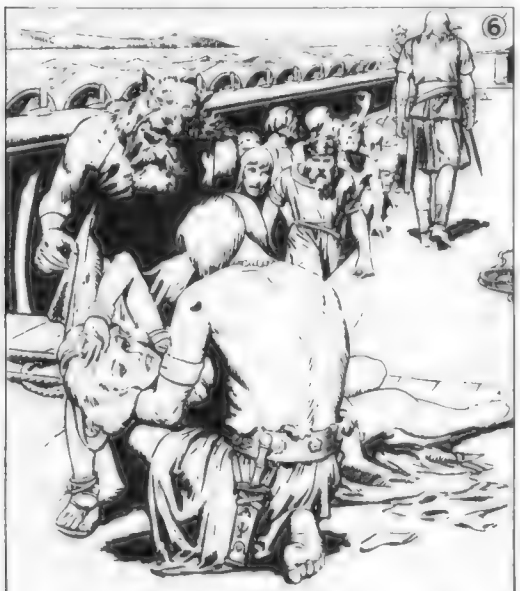
Synopsis: THE BODY OF THE MUTINEER LIES STILL AND ULFRUN ARISES. HE LOOKS AT ALETA; THE BLIND RAGE IS STILL UPON HIM, AS HE GAZES AT THE CAUSE OF ALL HIS SUFFERING. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE EIGHT BITTER WEEKS SINCE HIS VOYAGE BEGAN, HE WALKS SLOWLY TOWARD HER.... ..

....HE WALKS SLOWLY TOWARD HER, THE UNSHEATHED SWORD STILL IN HIS HAND. ALETA RISES CALMLY, BUT WITH THE CERTAIN KNOWLEDGE THAT HER LUCK, SUCH AS IT WAS, HAS NOW RUN OUT!

THE FACE THAT HAD ONCE BEEN SO COMMANDING IS NOW A LINED AND HAGGARD MASK OF DESPAIR; FURY STILL LINGERS IN HIS FEAR-HAUNTED EYES.

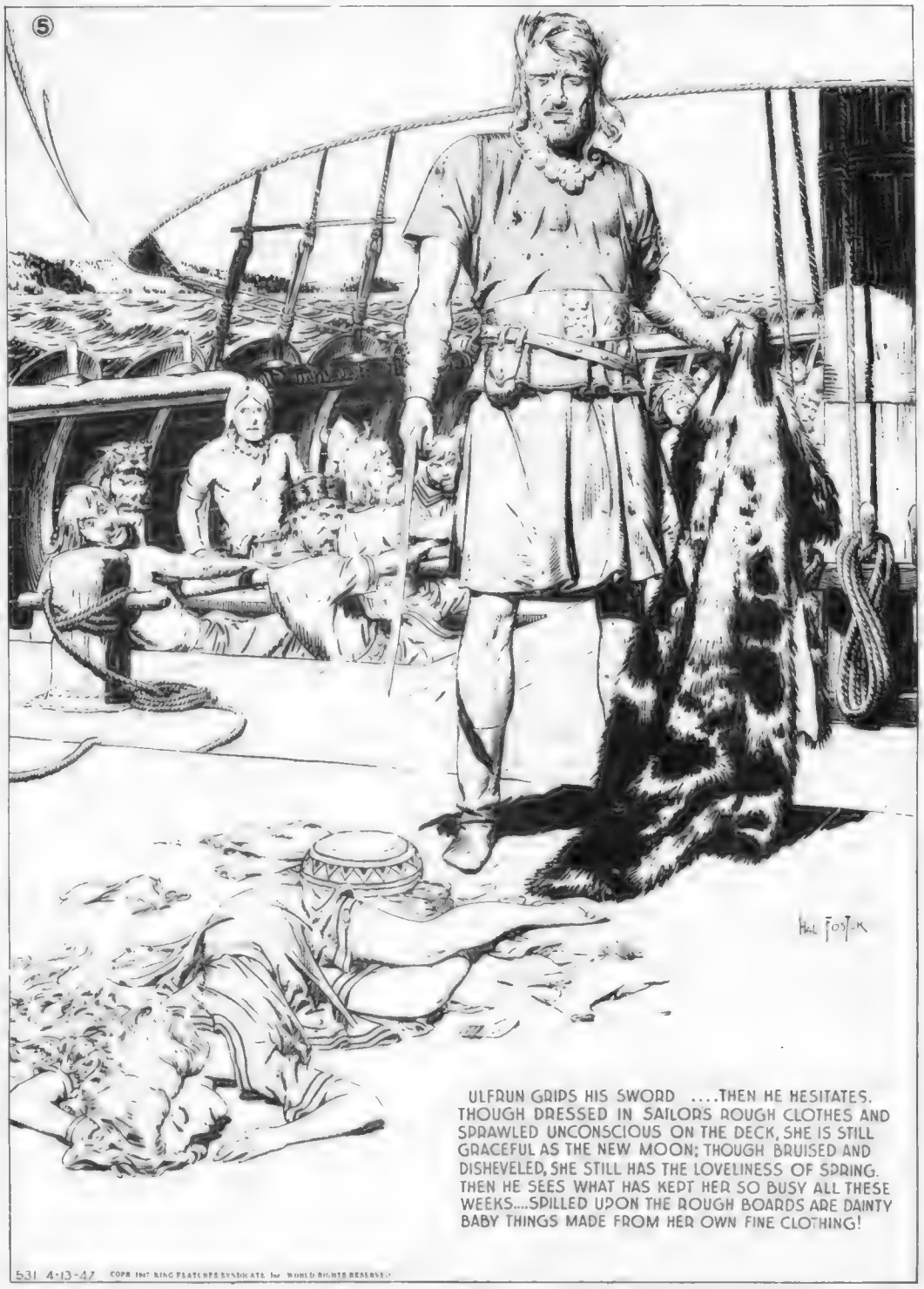


A SUDDEN LUNGE SENDS ALETA TO THE DECK! AND FROM THE THROATS OF THE CREW COMES A HOARSE GROWL, LOW, MENACING!



THEREAFTER, THE SAILORS GO TO ALETA'S AID. NO LONGER DO THEY HOLD ANY FEAR OF ULFRUN, THE SEA KING!

NEXT WEEK — No Further



ULFRUN GRIPS HIS SWORD ....THEN HE HESITATES. THOUGH DRESSED IN SAILORS ROUGH CLOTHES AND SPRAWLED UNCONSCIOUS ON THE DECK, SHE IS STILL GRACEFUL AS THE NEW MOON; THOUGH BRUISED AND DISHEVELED, SHE STILL HAS THE LOVELINESS OF SPRING. THEN HE SEES WHAT HAS KEPT HER SO BUSY ALL THESE WEEKS....SPILLED UPON THE ROUGH BOARDS ARE DAINTY BABY THINGS MADE FROM HER OWN FINE CLOTHING!

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37253

Prince Valiant

IN THE DAYS OF KING ARTHUR

BY HAROLD R FOSTER

Synopsis: "I AM AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE SAGA OF PRINCE VALIANT 'IN THE COURT OF SOME KING OR OTHER' AND NO AUTHOR IS GOING TO MAKE A PUPPET OF ME, TO DANCE ON A STRING WHENEVER THE CREATIVE INSPIRATION FAILS HIM. HERE IS MY LIFE STORY SO FAR, ALL FOUR WEEKS OF IT.

WHEN SEEING-TIME COMES THERE IS THE FIERCE, DARK FACE OF TILLICUM BESIDE ME. NOTHING CAN HARM ME, NEITHER THE ANGER OF DYING WINTER NOR THE HUNGER OF THE WOLVES AT THE EDGE OF THE CLEARING, WHILE SHE IS NEAR.

SOMEDAY I'LL GET MY HANDS IN THAT NICE RED HAIR. SHE WOULD LOVE TO TAKE ME IN HER ARMS, BUT MY NURSE IS VERY JEALOUS AND WILL GIVE ME ONLY TO MOMMIE.

I STAND FOR NO FAMILIARITY FROM MY SIRE. HIS GREAT STRONG HANDS ARE MORE FITTED TO A SWORD HILT THAN TO HOLDING PEOPLE. HE IS AFRAID OF ME, ONE YELL AND HE HANDS ME BACK TO MOMMIE.

NOW MY DAY STARTS. MOMMIE DOESN'T TALK VERY PL[illegible] UT SHE MAKES NOISES THAT TICKLE ALL OVER..

..AND WHAT I HAVE TO GO THROUGH TO MAKE HER HAPPY!

JUDGING FROM MY EXPERIENCE, THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE ARE: TO BE WARM AND DRY, A TUMMY NICE AND ROUND AND FULL, AND THEN SOME NICE DROWSY SOUNDS.

OUTSIDE THE CIRCLE OF MOMMIE'S ARMS THERE IS SOME MORE OF THE WORLD, BUT IT IS COLD AND SCARY. MY SIRE JUST CAME IN FROM THERE, NOT SMILING.....

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555 9-28-47

....."SOMEONE IS LOST," HE SAYS. "SEE WHAT I MEAN? JUST STAY CLOSE TO MOMMIE AND TILLICUM!"

NEXT WEEK — **The Long Trail.**

Prince Valiant

IN THE DAYS OF KING ARTHUR

BY HAROLD R FOSTER

Our Story: WHEN PRINCE ARN OPENS HIS EYES HE SEES FRYTHA BENDING OVER HIM, HER TEAR-WET FACE WHITE WITH ANXIETY.

BECAUSE OF HER CRUEL PRANK HER DEAR PLAYMATE AND GENEROUS COMPANION IS PAINFULLY INJURED.

AND IN THE WHILE THAT SHE NURSES HIM FRYTHA CHANGES. NO LONGER THE SPOILED, MISCHIEVOUS PRINCESS, BUT A VERY CONTRITE YOUNG MISS.

"HER PRANKS HAVE GONE TOO FAR!" HER ANGRY FATHER EXCLAIMS. *"SHE MUST BE SEVERELY PUNISHED!"* *"HAVE PATIENCE, I BEG,"* PLEADS THE MOTHER. *"SHE IS NOW SUFFERING HER OWN PUNISHMENT."*

BUT ARN IS YOUNG. IN A FEW DAYS HIS BRUISES AND BUMPS HAVE HEALED, THE FIGHT FORGOTTEN. NOT SO WITH FRYTHA; HER CONSCIENCE IS IN AGONY. *"I BRIBED THOSE BOYS TO BEAT YOU!"* SHE SAYS.

IN A TORRENT OF WORDS SHE CONFESSES HER PART IN THE DEED THAT LED TO ARN'S INJURIES.

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THEN SHE TURNS AWAY PROUDLY, FOR SHE IS A KING'S DAUGHTER AND MUST NOT LET ANYONE KNOW HER HEARTBREAK AT LOSING ARN'S FRIENDSHIP.

HAL FOSTER

"OH, I KNEW THAT," ANSWERS ARN CARELESSLY. *"NOW YOU'D BETTER CHANGE YOUR CLOTHES IF YOU ARE GOING FISHING WITH ME."*

NEXT WEEK- **Enter Claudius.**

1119

6-8-58

TV Cartoonist

Bob Beckett

Bob Beckett graduated from The School of Visual Arts in New York City in 1958, freelanced for a year or so, before he went in the Army Reserves for six months. Coming out, he got a job with a TV station, and then later came to WCAU-TV in Philadelphia where he's been for the past dozen years.

In addition to his TV duties, he currently does a regular editorial cartoon for a daily newspaper, contemporary cards for a couple of major greeting-card companies, children's magazine illustration for several magazines, spot cartoons for a local series of weekly shoppers' guides. As he notes in his remarks here, most of these latter cartoon activities resulted from the exposure his cartoons constantly get on Philadelphia television. We're pleased that he's anxious to share some of the TV cartoon technicalities with our readers.

By BOB BECKETT

A staff artist at a Philadelphia TV station involves being in a union, and there aren't very many cartoonists in this whole country in unions, other than animation people. The one I'm in is IATSE which, oddly enough, is the same union that the animation people belong to. This doesn't have anything to do with ruling the job, other than the fact that you have to be in this union to work at WCAU, or any of the other TV stations in Philadelphia.

My primary functions as an artist at a TV station are as a designer, a layout man doing paste-ups and mechanicals, and cartooning is just a small part of the picture.

I'd like to go into how the cartooning part of my job evolved because I certainly wasn't hired as a cartoonist. In fact I doubt if there's another cartoonist on a TV station in the Philadelphia, or South Jersey, or Delaware area. All these years I've been looking at the television around here and I have yet to see another cartoon done specifically for one of the stations. Of course you see a few cartoons on the networks, done in New York.

I do type design, layouts and mechanicals as I mentioned a moment ago, promotion art for our own shows, our movies, type designing for the local edition of TV GUIDE, and for the local newspapers.

When they hired me I was 23 or 24 years old, and they knew I was a cartoonist because, in general, cartoons were what the portfolio I showed them consisted of. But there was really no work of this specialized kind to be done at that time on the station, except a few things here and there for a local advertising spot or for one of the station's children's programs. But there was no regularity about any of these things. And I saw no reason to believe that anything was going to be built up that would really utilize my talents as a cartoonist. Outside of my working hours at WCAU I freelanced in cartooning, and this appeased my insatiable appetite for doing cartoons—greeting card art, and a few other related subjects.

I'm not sure just when cartooning started at WCAU but perhaps it began with my talking with our sports commentators and suggesting that if there happened to be a hot item some evening, I might do an editorial-type, Willard Mullin kind of sports cartoon to go along with the item. I went ahead and did it soon after (in black and white since we were still a B & W station at that time). I guess the commentator liked it since he asked me to do another one. Then someone in the newsroom saw it, liked it, and asked me to do a cartoon for *them*. Things picked up from there and before too long I was pretty busy in the middle of the afternoon when they started to put the 6 and 11 o'clock news packages together. They'd be coming down to me one, two, and three at a time really, and asking me to do a cartoon for them. The sports announcer was a regular, and the gal who does a feminine-angle editorial bit for a couple of minutes on each news show came down. She had some late-side-of-the-news bits that I would cartoon. And also there often would be something in a lighter vein in the general news that I could cartoon, and even the weather man, on occasion, would come down and ask me to design a series of weather slides. Up to 18 or 20 variations as to different kinds of weather were involved in that project. Through the years I've designed several series of these weather cartoons. I guess you can say that things have reached a point by now where every day of the week there's at least one cartoon on the news done by me and it's even branching out still further. There's a WCAU TV editorial done for 5 minutes two or three times a week, voicing the opinions of our station on various local and national political matters. For several years I've been suggesting that an editorial cartoon be made part of this segment which comes at the end of the news show, and I did the first of these recently. Fortunately, it was well received by our Vice-President and General Manager, the Program Director, and the bigwigs of the station. This is a whole different aspect of the TV cartoon because you can utilize movement.

These cartoons for the news can be used several different ways—full-screen where the whole TV screen would be my cartoon, with the camera being taken away from the sports or newscaster. Or the cartoon can be thrown up on the screen behind the news commentator so that the viewer sees the commentator and my cartoon in large size on a screen behind him.

At the present time I also do cartoons with greater frequency for other phases

A.M.?... What's it mean?
A Mistress ?
a.m.

10

of the station's activities. For instance, one of the salesmen may bring down a spot sold to a local plumber, or printer, or car dealer, with pretty much an open range on the design involved. Naturally I think cartooning morning, noon and night—breakfast, lunch, and dinner—and if given an opportunity I will try to work a cartoon into this TV commercial. Quite often my ideas along this line are bought and I go ahead and do finishes, with a series of cartoons involved.

Another example of how they utilize cartoons on a TV station has to do with local programming. We have regular shows—religious, kiddie, community programming shows—where they have occasion to use a cartoon in a break slide, a 'break slide' being what they go to and from when they're going to a commercial. They go full-screen to the name of the show, or to the name of a particular segment of the show, and sometimes it's cartoon-able. One of these is a black-oriented show named 'Right On' that has done a very serious and important series on consumer frauds, and some of their ideas have been handled in cartoon form. I've been able to give them a light touch, still preserving the serious nature of the thoughts involved.

From time to time we'll have a sports special, such as one we did before the Ali-Frazier fight. I did cartoons for the opening and the close, caricatures and drawings involving the two, and used cartoons on 'break slides'.

I've been called on to do magazine advertising. We do local promotional advertising in 'TV Guide', in The Inquirer, and in The Bulletin, and we've done advertising campaigns on our late shows, our early shows, or on syndicated reruns. These often have been handled with cartoons which perhaps run every day in the daily newspapers, or once a week in TV Guide.

Speaking of deadlines, I feel that there's *nobody* who has to meet the kind of deadline that an artist for TV does! For instance in the sports cartoon area our sports commentator may give me a buzz on the phone about 4:30p.m. He'll say, "Bob, what've you got for me today?" As we're on the phone he'll look over his wire service copy and will pick out a good item that may be cartoon-able. By this time it may be 4:40 — we decide on the topic—he rarely gives me an idea—just the topic. After a few moments of mental scrounging I'll say, "How about this, or that, etc?" He'll say, "Great!" and then will hang up. I have till 6 o'clock before the news goes on the air. The sports segment of the show goes on 10 or 15 minutes after 6 so you might say I have those extra minutes if I want to run up to the studio, carefully sneak in, and hand the cartoon to one of the assistant directors who will utilize it in time. At any rate I have little more than an hour or an hour-and-a-half to do this cartoon in full color.

A few notes on the rules we have to live by in doing cartoons for TV—these rules being quite different from those for any other media. For instance there's the matter of 'overshoot'. There is a safety area on art work that you are sure will show up on the TV screen but there's also an area that *may* get on the screen too if you're not careful—and you *don't* want viewers to get this latter area. Unless this area has been designed into the total picture, it can be very embarrassing at times if it's included inadvertently. And part of the board a piece of art work is sitting on might show up unexpectedly on the screen—that's one thing that can happen. A general rule is that you should add 10 or 15% all around your drawing in a safety-margin area which you figure *might* get on the screen too.

Also when doing art work for live television, you must steer clear of using stark whites or even bright yellows at

"WHADDAYA MEAN HE AIN'T WHAT YOU HAD IN MIND?"

times. I get around this by using a light gray board which has excellent saturation for the colors I use—Magic Markers or Dr. Martin's Dyes. Very light pastel boards can sometimes be used if they don't destroy the colors I add to the cartoons. If you're doing art work for slides, it doesn't matter so much because the slide systems can compensate for the stark whites and yellows, whereas the TV camera cannot.

For the sake of speed over the years, I've found that the Designer Series of Magic Markers is by far the best color medium that I can use—every color under the rainbow from pale rose to manganese blue to yellow ochre to flesh pink. Before I discovered them I was using Dr. Martin's Dyes with a plain old brush but that method took considerably longer than having a box of a couple of hundred Magic Markers in front of me. Every color is already sitting in the box just ready for me to pick it up, take the cap off, and use, rather than having to mix the color separately with dyes. I also make good use of the flat colors of the transparent adhesive-backed Bourges papers which have to be cut out with a knife, Color-Aid papers, and even wild gift-wrap paper for backgrounds for some of my cartoons when I have a little more time to spend on them. All in all, we have a pretty well equipped art department, and with CBS footing the bill for supplies, we are able to try almost any new commodity that the art supply salesman can offer us. Some items are really innovative and with time to use them, we can really get some different effects. However, generally speaking, my cartoons for TV are knocked out with Designers Magic Markers on a light gray, or a light-color board. I also use a series of Pentel black markers for my line work. We have them in several different line-widths—I particularly like a fine-line marker that I can double back on and make it as thick or thin as I want. I used an artist's fountain pen for a number of years, trying several different types of nib, but not too long ago arrived at the marker techniques I've been talking about. For one thing my fountain pen used to get stopped up almost daily.

I still use a brush to fill in large areas of black, or even at times, large areas of color. The Magic Markers don't always fill large areas as cleanly and smoothly as they do small areas.

The size of TV art really varies—I can do a cartoon on something 9 x 12″ or 11 x 14, or 14 x 17, and I've even done cartoons on full 30 x 40 pieces of illustration board, perhaps leaving a lot of overshoot area for use in zooming or panning around. We've also done art work practically the size of a postage stamp — it doesn't really matter what size we do it in because the TV camera, or even a slide camera, can go in as close, or back as far, as need be. As far as research material and scrap are concerned, the station of course has a fully-equipped news room with pictures and material coming in over the wires all during the day and night. We also have files of celebrity pictures in the promotion department (movie and TV people), and the news department has a file of political personalities—local and national. Personally, for my sports cartooning, I collect various magazines on hockey and football, baseball, basketball, etc. with the heads of all the players, and if I do a cartoon on any given night on a sports personality, I can reach under my desk and find the person I need. Or, as a last resort, we can call AP in New York and have them transmit, by wire, a picture of practically anybody in the world.

Since my cartoons have been appearing on Philadelphia TV, I have been able to turn that fact into some freelance work—in one case for the hockey team programs, and in another, for a local Philadelphia sports newspaper. I've even got a regular editorial cartoon assignment for a local South Jersey newspaper several times a week. Have done cartoons for several local sports magazines, and from time to time the AP wirephoto department has sent my cartoons across the country—cartoons I've done for them on a freelance basis.●

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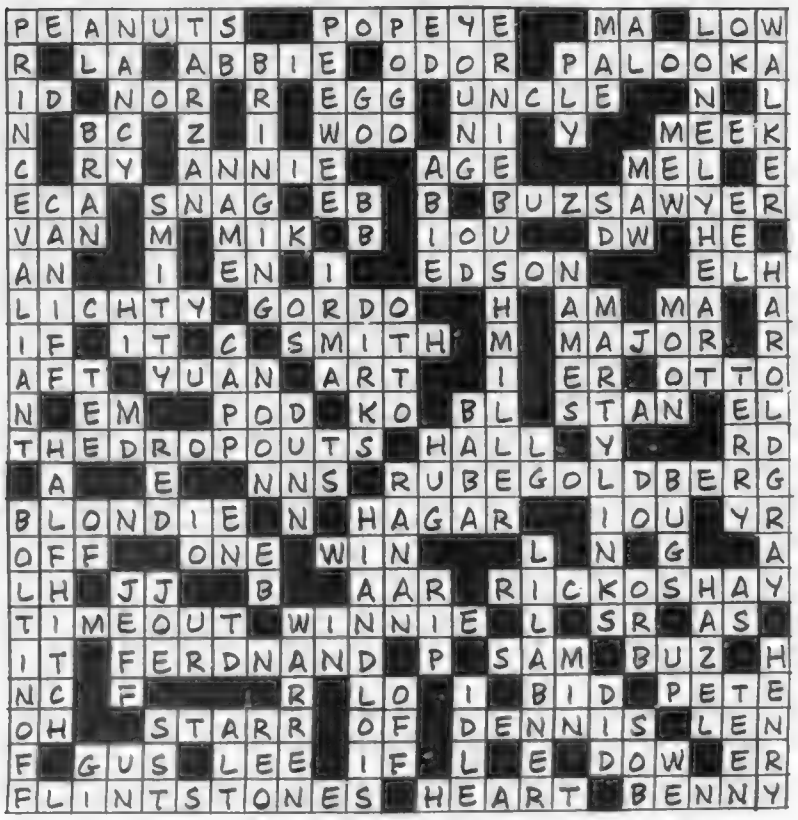
Tuesday-Friday 12:00-5:00 — Saturday 10:00-5:00

Solution to Crossword on Page **34**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FLINTSTONES HEART BENNY

Classified

FOR SALE: A collection of over 400,-000 cartoon clippings, consisting of a variety of gags from the Sat. Eve. Post, True, Colliers, and numerous other magazines and newspapers. Collection started in 1953. 1/2 of these are filed alphabetically under subject matter. Write Roy Wilson, 179 Pond View Drive, Southington, CT. 06489, or call (203) 628-9589.

WANTED: a small book on animation written by Ub Iwerks. In moving recently several items were lost including this book. Emidio Angelo, 7201 Wissahickon Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19119.

Pulp magazines wanted: Shadow, Spider, Weird, Terror, Mystery, G8, etc. Also original art, Cartoons Magazine, and comic books. Top prices paid. Joe Goggin, 6202 Greeley Blvd., Springfield, VA 22152.

Would like to locate Tom Creem, a caricaturist who did work for Theatre Magazine in the 1930's. Also whereabouts of Sorenson, Bill Levine, Roger Simpson. In some cases reprint fees are due them. Notify: The Cartoonists Guild, Inc., 156 West 72nd St., New York, N.Y. 10023. Attn: Ron Wolin.

Read new book 'The Art of Humorous Illustration' by Nick Meglin—$11.95. Watson-Guptill Publications

Would like issues #1 and #2 of CARTOONIST PROfiles. Please contact—Acquisition Dept., Order Section, U. of Nebraska Libraries, Lincoln, NB 68508.

JIM BERRY advertises his BENJY strip on the family bus! Linda Richardson of NEA told Jim he'd better watch out or other drivers will be running into telephone poles (or him) in their anxiety to get autographs.

We want to express our appreciation for the cooperation we received in this issue from Sylvan Byck, Joe Willicombe, Jr. and Jimmy Ryan of King Features, Audrey Chap of Publishers-Hall, Jim Freeman of United Features, Linda Kay Richardson of NEA, Roy Thomas of Marvel Comics, and John McMeel of Universal Press Syndicate.

WANTED: Originals by Rose O'Neill, Thomas Nast, A.B. Frost, Winsor McCay, Chester Gould, Walt Kelly, Outcault, & Alex Raymond. Will purchase or trade others. A. Paskow, 1662 Cropsey Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11213.

SAID and DUNN

Famed King Features cartoonist, BOB "They'll Do It Every Time" DUNN, continues here the column of reminiscences he began in Issue #17 of CARTOONIST PROfiles.

It took me forty-five years to find out who drew one of my early comic strip favorites. It appeared in the Newark Star-Eagle about 1922. The name of the strip was "Otto Auto" . . . not Otto's Auto . . . Otto Auto. Auto was the character's last name. He was always riding around in his little car and readers were invited to write in and suggest how to stop the jalopy. "He'd have to stop to eat" a fan wrote in. Otto didn't stop. He rode thru a picnic area and kept going with baskets of lunch on the seats, on the hood and in Otto's mouth.

Milton Caniff heard me asking a group of cartooners who were giving me the vacant looks and the shrugs and the "I have no idea," and he gave me the answer: *GENE AHERN!* Wow! I knew Ahern's work. "Our Boarding House" with Major Hoople for NEA. Judge Puffle, Room and Board, The Nut Brothers, Ches and Wal, when he came over to King Features.

Every once in a while some digger in cartoon lore will ask, who drew "Nov Smoz Ka Pop?" The answer again is Ahern. "Nov Smoz Ka Pop" was what the Little Hitch-Hiker said as he stood in different settings in the Sunday top piece of Room and Board, namely "The Nut Brothers."

Another story worth telling about Ahern is how he got started in cartooning. He grew up in Cleveland, copied Krazy Kat, Tad, Abe Kabibble and Jiggs while still in school and tried to get any job in a newspaper or Syndicate Art Dep't. But no luck.

He became a plumber's helper in the daytime, but spent his nights trying to draw a feature that would sell. He got the inevitable rejection slips, but kept going.

One day, in his plumber's helper role, while delivering a new porcelain toilet bowl, he met a man he knew who worked for NEA. The newspaperman had overwhelming tidings for young Ahern. "Hey, kid . . . they've been trying to get you. The Syndicate is taking your strip." Ahern broke the two mile record as he sprinted to sign his first cartoon contract. The strip that rang the bell for him was "Otto Auto."

Just one more thing . . . that toilet bowl he was carrying may still be on that busy corner in Cleveland, where he put it down when he left the plumbing trade to take his place as one of the funny paper greats.

But speaking of giants in our business, the Daddy of them all has to be Bud Fisher, creator of Mutt and Jeff, and incidentally, the creator of the only original American Graphic Art Form . . . The Comic Strip. There had been political cartoons in England and France and also the Single Panel 'He and She' gag-captioned drawings in Punch and La Vie Parisienne. But the four-paneled strip that Fisher started as a Horse Race Tip outlet was an American innovation. Fisher was the first cartoonist to become a millionaire. He wisely had copyrighted Mutt and Jeff. He owned a racing stable. He had one Rolls Royce after another. He married a titled European lady. There were Mutt and Jeff shows playing throughout the world. His characters were in early animated movies. Toys, books, advertising . . . he had a big piece of everything.

New comic artists with new cartoons began to overshadow Mutt and Jeff. The strip settled into a taken-for-granted groove and even another Fisher came along: Ham, with Joe Palooka, who was almost as flamboyant as his non-relative Fisher the First.

Every once in a while there'd be a news story about Bud. He was presented at court. He did a chalk talk for his fellow passengers on the Leviathan. He was getting a messy divorce. He gave away his racing stable. He fell down stairs and broke a few assorted bones.

In 1947, Rube Goldberg invited the by now legendary Bud to be guest of honor at the National Cartoonists Dinner at the Society of Illustrators Clubhouse on E. 63rd St., and the great man showed up. He was frail, but still very dapper in his English cut pin-stripe suit, using a cane, not as a nifty prop, but as an aid in moving about. It was sad to see this one-time Hell-raiser practically tottering, as Rube led him to the place of Honor. I never took my eyes off him. He just picked at his food. I saw him whispering to Rube, who looked concerned. Rube stood up, called for attention, and announced that Mr. Fisher couldn't stay until after dinner, but would address the gathering now. The cartooners gave him a standing ovation, as he painfully struggled to stand. I figured him to be crowd-

GENE AHERN

ing 80 years of age.

I expected him to say he was under doctor's orders to get home to bed or to a hospital.

He spoke: "Fellow members of a wonderful profession, I must apologize for not being able to stay to enjoy this festive occasion, but I promised to take my Mother to a nightclub," and with a jaunty wave, he tottered off to thunderous applause of a completely caught off guard audience.

A few years passed. Coming out of the Waldorf after a Ban Shee luncheon, I met Rube Goldberg and George McManus, two of my all time idols. They told me they were going to visit Bud Fisher, and asked me if I wanted to come along. Did I? Wow! So we sauntered up Park Avenue a few blocks and turned in at an exclusive apartment house with a doorman dressed like a Sea Going Cardinal to usher us in. An inside attendant politely inquired whom we wished to see, gave us the Suite number, and escorted us to the elevator. I figured an apartment in a beautiful building like this must cost at least $1,000 a month, even way back then.

The elevator stopped, and we stepped off into a private foyer. $1,250 a month, I decided.

Rube rang the bell. A big beautiful nurse opened the door and bade us enter. It was like stepping back into the year 1925. The brown Kraftex walls gave the living room a dingy cast like a Boris Karloff set. Knee high, stacked against the walls were unopened, tan bank envelopes. There must have been hundreds of them. We passed the dining room. On the huge ornate table was a single spat. As if Adolph Menjou had gotten half dressed there. For the younger generation's information, spats were what dudes wore to keep their ankles warm and look nifty at the same time.

"In here!" It sounded like the croak of a Mynah bird. We followed the sound to the master's sleeping quarters and entered. If the rest of the apartment looked shabby-genteel the bedroom looked the corner of Skid Row and Tobacco Road. No carpeting or rug. Cigarette butts all over the Parquet floor. An old Italian leather framed (glass cracked) faded picture of President Warren G. Harding, with his arm around a smiling, debonair Bud. I couldn't believe what we we were seeing. The big bed had no sheet on it. Just the bare mattress. And two beaten-up old pillows without pillowcases. 'Propped up on an elbow was the legendary creator of Mutt and Jeff. He hadn't been shaved in at least a week. It reminded me of a movie I had seen long ago . . . Beau Brummel . . . when the once fastidious Beau was dying in squalor. John Barrymore, another pal of Fisher's, had played Brummel.

George McManus and Rube tried to keep things light. George introduced me as a young cartoonist, and Bud shook hands. He seemed unaware of his shabby surroundings. "How are things with you guys?" he asked Rube and George, like Babe Ruth being nice to a couple of rookies.

When they asked him how he felt, he was all business "Fine. Just getting over a little cold. Gotta get up and get my strips in." We all knew that he hadn't drawn the strip for many years. Al Smith had been ghosting his feature for fifteen years. We all knew that, but let Bud ramble on.

"The schedule's in good shape, but I want to get in a Sunday page tonight. It's nice seeing you guys, but I gotta go to work."

He shook hands again, smiling, leaned back on the pillows, turned away on his side, and the visit was over.

We left quietly. The beauty in the nurses's uniform let us out. I wondered. She didn't seem like a nurse. Why didn't she clean the place up? She looked more like an ex-show girl, than a Florence Nightingale. Well, from what I've heard, Bud always did like beautiful women around him.

As we walked through the magnificent lobby, I guess we were all thinking of the squalid scene upstairs. Rube said it: "Bud has his garbage sent in by Rolls Royce."

The Mutt and Jeff strip was still going, but not too successfully. Al Smith was doing a good job on it, but it suffered from being around too long.

After Bud's death, the National Cartoonists Society was invited to have breakfast with President Eisenhower in Washington. About 200 members showed up in the dining room of the Electric Power and Light Building. Alex Raymond was N.C.S. President and introduced Ike, who seemed really happy to be there. Newsreels, TV and the press were all over the place.

President Eisenhower thanked us for the work we had done thru cartoons to help the Bond Drive.

He said He'd liked cartoons, since he was a little boy and had first seen Mutt and Jeff. "And to this day" he continued "the first thing I turn to in the paper is still 'Mutt and Jeff'."

The result of that plug by Ike, was that papers throughout the world wanted the feature. Sales zoomed. Orders for "M. and J." were coming in over the transom to Bell Syndicate. Al Smith was in more papers than Bud had been in his heyday.

And it couldn't have happened to a nicer cartooner. Al (The Republican) Smith. ●

Bud Fisher

MUTT AND JEFF

HOORAY FOR MUTT AND MAISIE!
JEFF, LISTEN TO THE CROWD! WE'RE A HIT! THAT HUNDRED-BUCK PRIZE IS A CINCH! IT'S IN THE BAG!
JITTERBUG CONTEST $100 TO WINNING COUPLE
10-6
THIS IS THE LAST DANCE! MAKE IT GOOD!
BOY, I NEED A SMOKE AFTER THAT! GOT A MATCH, MUTT?
?
REFEREE
JITTERBUG CONTEST
H. Fisher

Art Director for

In Issue # 16 of CARTOONIST PROfiles you read a story about the famed magazine cartoonist, IRWIN CAPLAN, who is now a graphic designer in Seattle, Washington. His latest assignment is that of Art Director for EXPO '74, the World's Fair which will be held in Spokane, Washington from May through October 1974. Here he tells us some of the problems he has faced in doing the art for this gigantic project.

This is the second World's Fair I've worked on, and it's a fascinating, absolutely unbelievable sort of an experience, condensing what would be 10 or 15 years of thought and labor in some other media into a few short years of work. About two summers ago a representative of the Spokane advertising agency, Coons, Shotwell and Adams, made an appointment with our studio, as they did with many others in Seattle, to interview different people with the possibility of finding an Art Director for communications for the World's Fair in Spokane (Expo '74). Some work had been done previous to this search for an Art Director, the agency's Art Director had done a preliminary brochure, and a Spokane Graphic Designer had done a logo and the type face had been more or less set. (Gronk). With some of this material to look at, our studio (7 men) was interviewed as a group. The choice came down to 2 or 3 individuals, and without any great fanfare, I learned that I had been selected as Art Director.

I met with the principals of the agency shortly after, and thus began my relationship with Bob Coons, one of the partners in the Spokane agency which would be responsible for most of the media advertising. Bob, who's a civic-minded leader in the Spokane Community, was instrumental in wanting to start the Fair in the first place, and had been devoting a superhuman amount of time to the project. Coons had the responsibility to answer the questions and to propose the themes to the many committees that exist in the upper echelons of the Fair Boards. In a World's Fair, which is founded by city fathers, there are all kinds of people to answer to because, underneath it all, money is such a desperate problem when you're trying to put together these multi-faceted, extremely expensive civic occurrences. There are elections, levies, votes being taken, etc., and of course these matters are all outside the area that the Art Director works in.

The situation was that I was a free-lance Art Director, maintaining my own business in Seattle, and I would be working on a series of art problems that were scheduled almost from the beginning. I flew to Spokane occasionally (47 minutes by air) whenever there was a major presentation to be made to other departments, or to the agency itself, and when there was some particular problem that needed to be delved into face-to-face.

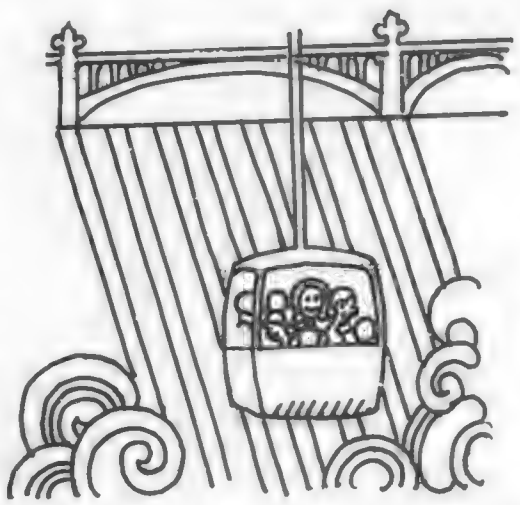
Our immediate goal was to put out as nice a brochure as we could—not for the general public but for people who might be interested in exhibiting at the Fair. It would also serve as a public relations vehicle to impress other countries with what the Fair would have to offer. You find yourself trying to put out a brochure about a Fair in which you don't quite know how many countries are going to be exhibitors, and you have to tell the story without being too specific about things that 2 years ago we knew very little about. A designer, Mits Katayama, from our studio, worked with

IRWIN CAPLAN

"HOPE YOU'LL BE COMFY, DAVE, IF IT GETS COLD DURING THE NIGHT, JUST LET THE TOP DOWN."
SATURDAY EVENING POST

Illustration by Irwin Caplan

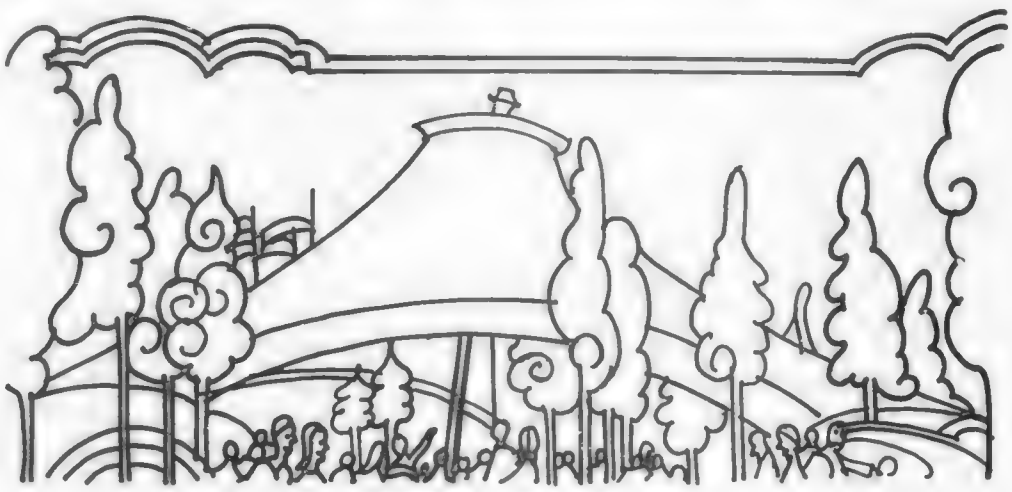
me on this particular project, and we decided to use a form of graphic that I had been using as a painting style. From the samples you're including with this story, you'll notice that there are cubes of varying shapes and dimensions, and in this way we could show the various aspects of the Fair—the corners of buildings, those fragments of the Fair that we knew already were going to exist. We could suggest atmospherically those particular aspects of the Fair that we were uncertain about. We knew that there would be forms of entertainment but just exactly what those forms would be, would be hard to show. We knew what several of the pavilions looked like (The Federal Pavilion and The State Pavilion), and so we could show *them* more or less in their blueprint form. We knew that one of the outstanding features of the Fair was the fact that it probably is situated in one of the most spectacular sites of all time—on several islands over a falls which is just about the height of Niagara. Visitors would be traveling over bridges and foot bridges and would be in the middle of a river that terminates in this beautiful falls. There would be rides even down into the falls itself. These things all had to be exhibited. Another thing we had to show was that the reason for the Fair was that it was an *environmental* fair, and we had to indicate the environment with which Spokane was surrounded. It was discovered that the site of the Fair

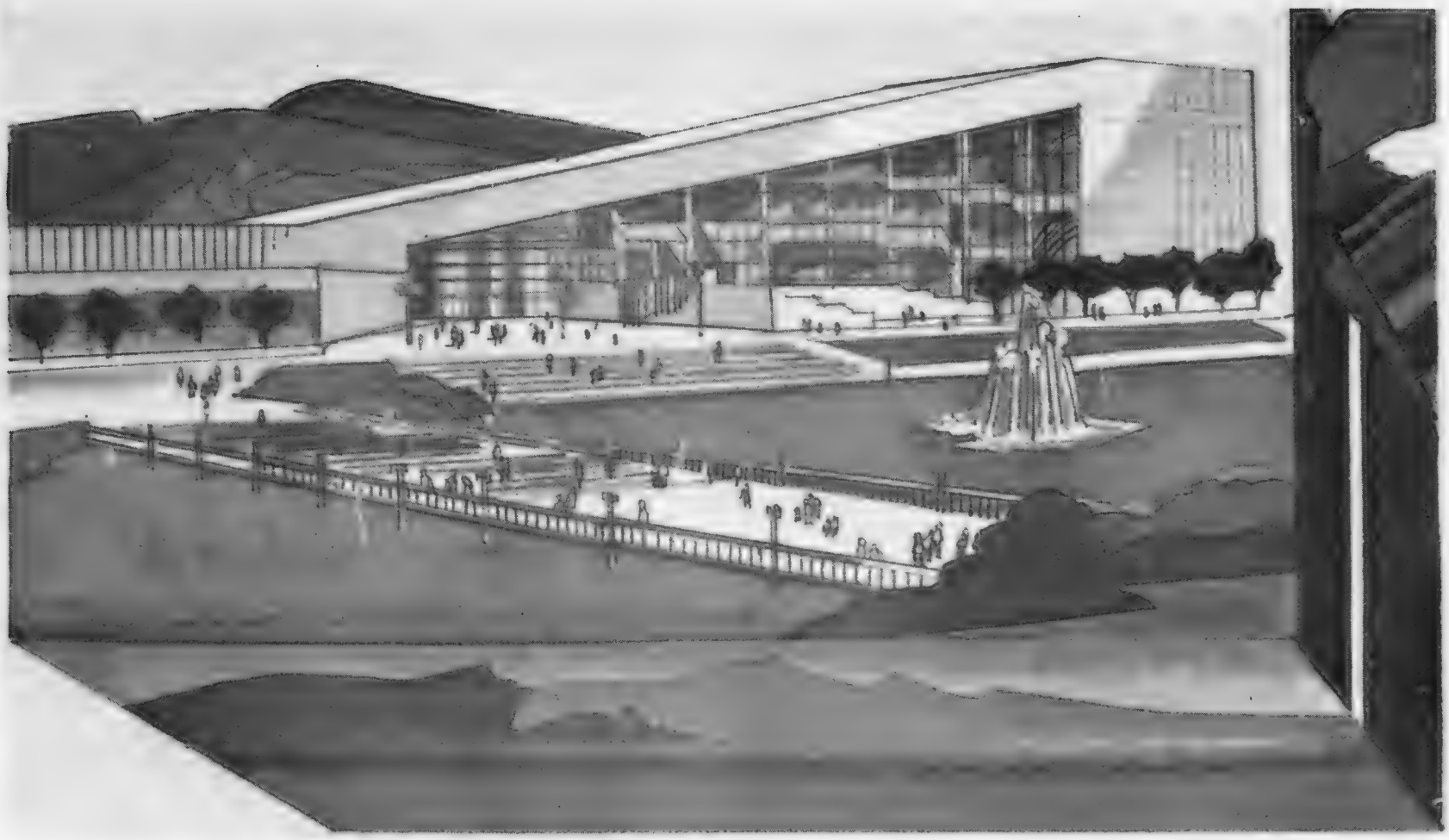


Decorative spots done by Caplan for the Hi-Fi page.

was not more than a day-and-a-half ride from more National Parks than any other location in the U.S. The Fair would have meaning in that you could visit the National Parks and also the Fair. It was in a state that encompasses almost all the beauties of nature that a person could want—the hot climate of eastern Washington, great wheat fields and rivers, Grand Coulee Dam, mountains left over from the erosions of the ice fields so many centuries ago, the seacoast, the nearness of Canada and the beauties of Banff and Lake Louise, and all the other things. We tried to allude to all these things in the brochure and to make it coherent and modern and a contemporary piece. We used this device of segmented cubes floating in space, with high color, and hoped it would do the trick for us. The cover was die-cut—there are very simplified elements like bird-life and cloud-life, and the illustrations were printed on parchment. It was a calculated risk on our part to do something different and yet in keeping with the brochure. As you open it, you see the faint reverse side of the image, and as you turn the pages, the bright art work on the parchment unfolds for you.

Then we worked on an all-purpose poster, still clinging to the theme of the so-called segmented space-oriented graphics. The central picture, which is also the first one in the brochure, is a scene showing the Fair almost directly



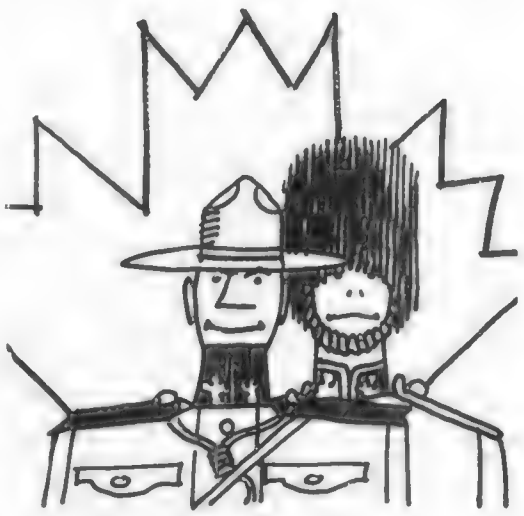


situated over the falls of the Spokane River, with the mountains in the background, and with the bright colors of an eastern Washington sunset showing. Nature spots, animals, mountains and seacoast are shown. Because of a limited budget, we tried to make every bit of art work do double and triple and quadruple duty. The poster had to do more than be a nice-looking graphic—it had to say quite boldly that Expo '74 is a World's Fair and to say where and when it's going to take place.

We also, at the same time, did the normal handout-type brochure that is given out to the public at airline offices, gas stations, tourist bureaus, etc. This too was designed by Mits Katayama, and I did the illustrations. As more and more definite information about the exhibitors becomes known, the material in the brochure has to be updated.

I laid out the newspaper ads that would run in this part of the country, and those for other states. Naturally you need somewhat different copy to reach vacationers who will have to come great distances to the Fair, than you do for people in the general Spokane area. Incidentally, World's Fairs depend very heavily on repeat visits from those who live within a 50-mile radius of the Fair. I also laid out two principal types of billboards—one was the spectacular type to be used in the California area, and the other was the normal 30-sheet board.

At present I'm going to tackle an entertainment poster, trying to correlate it as much as I can with the first poster. The entertainment factor at a World's Fair is one of those things that can be described in superlatives because almost everybody in the entertainment field will be here in the summer of '74. As a cartoonist, one of the jobs I liked the most was doing a Hi-Fi page to go pretty much nationally. It's a form of newspaper page you've all seen that is not in the normal run—it's printed on better paper with gravure color, and is preprinted. A message is printed in the space that's left for it. I chose a series of humorous, decorative spots interspersed with some full-color photography, and it was a pleasure to do them because ordinarily there isn't much humor used in Fair material because first of all you have to establish credibility. Throughout the campaign I used transparent dyes that are so popular with artists at the present time. Some of their brilliance naturally is lost in reproduction but it keys you up to the height of color that you presuppose a Fair might have. Architectural innovations are always present at a Fair, and when I first became Art Director, I spent quite a bit of time with the architects, looking at the blueprints, and at the models, so I would know what I was going to draw. The architectural firms are in Seattle and when there was a structural feature I needed to have, I would visit the architect who would lead me around by the hand and show me how the thing was going to work. ●



This Funny Business

PROfiles has made it a practice not to reprint articles which have appeared elsewhere, simply because we want our readers to get all original material when they subscribe to our publication. In the following instance we've made an exception in order to reproduce a talk which our friend, TOM PEOPLES, the Director of Comic Art for The Newspaper Enterprise Association, made recently before the Scripps-Howard Managing Editors. It's unusual to find such a detailed analysis of the business of comics by such a knowledgeable individual in our field. These remarks were first published in The Scripps-Howard News.

By TOM PEOPLES, *Newspaper Enterprise Association*

Being a director of comic art is something like calling defensive signals for the Miami Dolphins — it's a great guessing game.

You are trying to guess what kind of a strip the editors are looking for, what sort of strip the readers will spark to, what kind of a strip will fill the unknown void you're going to try to fill. If you guess right often enough, you gain stature as a so-called comics expert — if you guess wrong too often, you become an ex-comic art director. And that's what happens to the defensive signal callers, too.

I think the basic purpose of comics is to entertain. I see the comics pages as entertainment pages.

This coming from a Comics Art Director is going to sound like heresy, I know; but I don't feel that comics or entertainment pages should be restricted to comics only. Along with the comics and to break up the pages, I believe you should incorporate such features as a crossword puzzle, a bridge column, the popular horoscope or astrological feature, the patterns, children's puzzles, or question corners, or possibly a local feature, one that is strictly in your area. These are just some of the features I think could go on there.

▫

There is one feature that I, personally, do not believe belongs on the comics pages — it's the doctor's column. Not too long ago, I was reading the comics page and down in the corner was the doctor's column. The good doctor had a subhead "What to do about constipation." To me that is not very entertaining, and I don't think it's going to turn many people on — it might turn them off.

The use of the type features I mentioned earlier helps open up the page; and I, for one, have nothing against white space. It makes a page a lot easier to read; it is less forbidding, less ominous looking. I believe it was unfortunate that as a result of the newsprint shortage we are experiencing and the increased cost of newsprint, that many papers recently elected to reduce the size of their comics.

About reduction in comics sizes:

Happily, most of you weren't forced to make drastic reductions. Many papers across the country did, and the resulting pages in most cases were hideous. The comics were jammed in and looked like a page of postage stamps. They are hard to read and turn off many readers. Last month I visited several of our artists in Florida; and in each city, I heard a story about someone's mother or father or the teller himself passing up the comics because they were too hard to read.

There was the same reaction by the readers of the Knoxville News-Sentinel, the Des Moines Register, the Kansas City Star, and the Long Island Press. This was also true in Ossining, New York, and Galion, Ohio. In all cases the papers had reduced to three-column size and then went back to four because of reader protest. Knoxville went up to four then back to 3½.

At NEA we have had the narrowest four-column for years. We went to seven inches several years ago at the request of many editors. United Features adopted the 7-inch width last year. Because of the smaller size, our artists didn't have as much trouble adjusting to the reduced size as some others did. We did bump up the size of the lettering, urged the artists to eliminate as much background art as possible; and we cut the 75-word-per-strip limit to no more than 65 words per strip or panel. This was particularly necessary for the continuity strips where the guys try to tell it all.

▫

On this business of reducing strips and jamming them in, many artists favor using fewer strips on a page and not reducing below the four-column size. Art Sansom, creator of "The Born Loser," told me the other day he'd rather see "The Loser" dropped from a page if necessary rather than see the strips reduced to three columns.

Hopefully the newsprint situation will continue to ease, and we won't be faced with continued reductions in size.

As to which comics should be on a page, it's hard to say. It's the same story as the old one about the fellow who said, "I don't know anything about art, but I know what I like." Comics readers are like that. Also, some of the features

THOMAS E. PEOPLES, vice president and director of comic art, joined Newspaper Enterprise Association in 1953 as a picture editor and desk man after a 15-year career as a photographer with Central Press Association and International News Photos. He was named comics production editor in 1958 and director of comic art 10 years later.

Peoples, who operates out of NEA's business headquarters in Cleveland, travels frequently for talks with artists and writers in the east, south and far west.

In the six years he has directed the department, Peoples has developed and introduced a number of innovative features including "This Week in Astrology," the first illustrated astrology feature, and "Johnny Wonder's Question Corner," which draws thousands of letters each week from 8-to 15-year-old readers.

Last year he introduced one of the really "funny" funnies, "Frank and Ernest" by Bob Thaves.

Along with developing new features, Peoples and his staff are responsible for the editing and production of 40 daily and Sunday comics now issued by NEA.

Peoples was born in Cleveland and took his first newspaper job there with Central Press in 1938 after attending John Carroll University. He spent five years in the Army, as a photographer and a combat engineer and was discharged as a first lieutenant in January, 1946.

For many years during his NEA career, Peoples wrote the continuity of the Major Hoople "Our Boarding House" Sunday page. He still writes the Major Hoople football forecasts.

Go Right to the Readers to Find Out What They Are Looking For

have a better pull in certain geographical areas. One of our features which stands very high in our surveys, and for which we pay a good deal of money, has great acceptance in the Midwest, the South, Southwest, and Far West and draws zilch in the East. I don't pretend to understand why. So you have to know your readers and your area.

About surveys:

This brings up the question of "How do you know what the readers like? How do you determine if a strip is pulling its weight?" We at NEA have to depend on our annual surveys of our client editors and the mail which filters through to us from your subscribers. It seems to me you are in a much better position to get an accurate reading. You can and should go right to the readers for the answers every year and certainly no more than every two years.

•

The survey should be given prominent display and appear for a minimum of six days — longer if possible, and each day there should be a story about comics, this funny biz, a creator, and ballot. The more exposure you can give it, the better reading you should get. Every subscriber doesn't see the paper every day and too often they'll say to themselves, "I'll fill that survey out tomorrow;" and when tomorrow comes, they discover the paper has been tossed out.

The daily ballot should list all of the comics with appropriate boxes where the reader can indicate whether he reads it regularly, frequently, or never. There should also be space provided for the reader to list his favorite comics and the ones he likes the least.

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My next thought on this is going to cause you some headaches, but I think it would be worthwhile and give a more accurate reading. The order of the listing of the comics should vary from day to day, or at a minimum every second day. The reason for this is that people tend to be lazy and won't always read through the list, so they'll check off the top ones. Also, there is the personal preference of the person making up the ballot. Without realizing it, he will list the comics, or any other features, in the order in which he rates them, or the ones that come to mind first. I know from personal experience on doing surveys for International News and NEA to determine the leading news stories or news pictures of the past year, almost invarably the ones we showed at the top of the list or the most recent happenings got the most votes. So stay away from alphabetical listing and mix in the panels and the strips.

We would be happy to provide you with a limited number of originals of our comics for you to award to readers as an inducement to participate in the survey. I'm sure other syndicates would do the same. I leave it to you as to how you would ration them out. Perhaps you could ask your readers to write letters about your comics and their suggestions on change with the most provocative letter writers receiving selected originals for their trouble.

About protests:

The question often comes up: "How do you rate readers' protests — or lack of protest — on the dropping of a comic?" And that's a difficult question to answer. There are so many things going on these days all the way from Watergate, to how do you get enough gas to keep the family bus on the road, that the readers may be pardoned if they don't get exercised about the dropping of a comic.

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It may be the seeming inability of anyone to give a straight story that is at the bottom of the readers not protesting. There seems to be a feeling that no one in authority gives a damn about what an individual thinks. The readers could easily transfer that attitude to their favorite newspaper comic. That feeling of "what's the use of squawking, the paper won't listen to me anyway." I know, I hear things like that from members of my own family. I also know it isn't true.

We've had a couple of examples recently. When the Washington Star took over the features and comics from the News, they took over about 10 of our comics. One of them was "Alley Oop;" and Dan Poole, of the Star, told me of their first experience with "Oop" fans. Seems that with their own comics and those of the News they had between 50 and 60 to run. On the second day of the combined run, the make-up man called Dan and told him they'd inadvertently dropped "Oop" from the lineup. They still had time to catch it if Dan insisted. Poole decided to let it go, and he says he'll never do it again. Dan personally handled 135 phone calls, and he didn't know how many letters they received. Most of the callers were pretty belligerent, according to Dan. So we know how they felt.

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This happened, too, at the Cleveland Plain Dealer which carries our "This Week in Astrology" Sunday color feature. In an attempt to cut back on the size of their section last November, the PD dropped the feature; and Will Adams tells me the phone practically jumped off the wall. I know they got calls because we got some in our Cleveland office from readers demanding we put it back in the Sunday section. The feature carries the NEA copyright, and they mistakenly thought we had taken it away from the PD. It was back in just as soon as it could be worked into the printing schedule.

Give a New Strip At Least a Year Before Dropping It from a Page

On the other hand all of you, I'm sure, have had experience with strips that have been dropped without a protest and when that happens it scares me. Our newest gag strip — "Frank and Ernest" — is a case in point. The reception across the country has been excellent in both the daily and the Sunday fields. Every week we pick up a couple of more customers. Local surveys show the comic is moving up among the leaders in popularity; and we get a lot of complimentary mail and requests for originals. Bob Thaves has been invited to speak before many groups out in California where he lives. But I also know of one paper which dropped it and received only a couple of complaints. It could be in the latter case the strip hadn't run long enough to build up a solid core of followers.

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Any new strip, in my opinion, should be given at least a year to prove its worth. Most strips start off at a high plateau. The initial material is an accumulation of the artists's best efforts over a six to 12-month pre-publication production period. After those strips have run their course there's a kind of dip in quality till the creator gets his second wind and then the good ones pick up and go on from there. So it's difficult to make a judgement on, say, three months or even six months.

In Jim Freeman's farewell interview in Editor & Publisher in early January, he recalled that "Peanuts" limped along with only "18 to 20 papers for the first year and then it zoomed." It would have been a horrible mistake to have killed it that first year. Another reason for the apparent apathy on the part of the readers may be the fact there are so many comics on the market these days. There are such a large number it's hard to build up a personal feeling for all of them. Unless they feel very strongly about it they won't write.

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Underlying the lack of protest may be the feeling about the "credibility" of the press which has been under attack by many national figures in recent years. The readers may feel if they don't trust the paper or if it's not "their" paper, why bother to write.

What's new in the business? What

about nostalgia as regards some of the old-time favorites? What about special interest comics?

What's new in the business is what's been new for the past couple of years — the readers prefer the gag-a-day quick hitters. The boom-boom and out variety which gives them a laugh and demands nothing in return. They don't need to follow the cast of characters, no need to remember what happened yesterday. That still seems to be the trend. The continuity strips are in trouble. They undoubtedly are the victims of TV where a viewer can sit down and get the whole Marcus Welby story in 55 minutes and not have to wait for 8 to 10 weeks to find out how it all comes out.

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Another thing that is new, but not really new for those of you who have been using our Sunday color comics, is the quarter-pages. For the past eight years, we have had a Four-For-Fun color page featuring one-quarter horizontal renderings of "Berry's World," "The Born Loser," "Eek & Meek," and "Short Ribs." For variation to that lineup we also had "Campus Clatter" available in the one-quarter size. Last Fall when the newsprint crunch really started to hurt, Greater Buffalo required all of their print customers with eight pages or more to make a cut in the size of their sections. This resulted in a rash of features being produced in the one-quarter size to get four comics in where we used to run two or three. All of the syndicates came in with one-quarter pages, and we started to produce three more — "Frank and Ernest," "This Week in Astrology," and "Benjy" — to give us a total of eight. Naturally, this increased our Sunday production costs.

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What about nostalgia? In a 1973 survey, Market Facts, Inc., asked about the older comics: 93% of the adults and 89% of the teen-agers queried said they "used to love the comics when they were little kids." When asked which comics strips they now liked best, 69% of the adults and 74% of the teen-agers said it was the "strips they grew up with." There are a good many old-timers that are still around and are just as good if not better than the original. Some: Gasoline Alley, Out Our Way, Alley Oop, Snuffy, They'll Do It Everytime. Others: Mary Worth, Blondie. Incidentally, Rocky Mount, North Carolina, recently dropped Mary Worth and Beetle Bailey. Reader protests forced them to reinstate Mary Worth. Beetle stayed out. I would have bet the other way.

What about special interest comics? I don't think we'll ever come to the point where we have to have a special comic for every segment of society, e.g.: A black comic, or a senior-citizen comic, or one for each ethnic group. There are

Special Interests Humor Often Is Contrived and Dies Quickly

some in this category now: "Wee Pals," "Quincy," "Dateline Danger," and "Friday Foster." The latter pair died recently. Also we have "Redeye" and "Tumbleweeds" based on American Indians. Getting into the specific area is very chancy. Most of these groups are touchy be they blacks, ethnics, Indians, lawyers, dentists or what-have-you. Too often, too, these features are contrived and nothing is more deadly than that. However, if you had five family situations, and they were all funny, that'd be great.

There is sometimes a need to fill a void. When we launched "The Badge Guys" several years ago, it was an attempt to fill such a void. The police or the "Pigs," if you will, were having some rough sailing at that time; and we were presented with a strip which depicted the cops as real people with wives, kids, and all the problems all of us experience, and in a light, humorous vein in contrast to the standard detective whodunit type strip.

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We launched the strip and got a very good play; but in a year or so, the campus riots disappeared; the antagonism to the police on the streets softened; and the cops weren't such bad guys; and the interest in the strip waned. The humor wasn't quite good enough to hold the readers' interest, so that was the end of it. It may well be that that is exactly the right pattern for a "special interest" feature. Maybe we should jump on it; and when it runs its course in a year or two, dump it just as fast. Every comic is not going to have the lasting power of a "Gasoline Alley," a "Peanuts," a "Beetle Bailey," or a "Major Hoople." Dr. Smock is special interest type in that it's about humorous doctor situations in contrast with the regular Ben Casey, Dr. Kildare, or Rex Morgan type.

About readership:

Who's reading the comics? Carl Schmidt, of Metro, tells me a recent survey they had done shows 8 out of 10 readers are reading the comics. Of 3,496 youngsters (8-13) questioned in 8 major cities — Chicago, Cincinnati, Denver, Des Moines, Detroit, Houston, Minneapolis, and Seattle — 89% mentioned comics as the section they most enjoyed. Sports finished second with 47% mentioning it as a favorite. Of the adult readers, 35% have attended or graduated from college, 43.6% of the women and 55.3% of the men belong to a country club, 36.2% of the women and 40.7% of the men own securities with a current value of $50,000 or more. The comics still appear to hold audiences of all ages.

If I were putting a page or pages of comics together, I would use about 20 comics. I would give them plenty of white space and run them as large as possible. I think it's too bad that the comics have become the victim of space limitations of WWII and the current newsprint crunch. The old five and six-column strips and three-column panels really turned the readers on and gave the creators room to display their talents.

Of the 20 comics, I would use six panels, 10 gag strips and four continuities. While the surveys indicate the story strips have lost some of their popularity, I believe there are sufficient numbers of readers around to merit their use. The continuities appear to be strongest among the youngsters (10-15) and those over 35. Even the humor guys today often have five-or six-day continuities; so, I for one do not believe the continuities are dead. With the right combination of art and writing they will go.

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In the 16 years I've spent in comics, the emphasis in the business has changed. When I got in, the artist was the big man on a strip; and he could carry a poor story or a weak gag. That isn't true today. The writer today shares equal responsibility, maybe he doesn't get equal billing; but he is equally responsible for the success of the strip, particularly the story strips.

I have seen surveys (Comics Council, for one) which indicate comics should be restricted to the comics page. This I don't subscribe to. I don't believe they should be run-of-the-paper, but they should be anchored in certain sections of the paper. Like the op-ed page where you have a "Berry's World" or "Dunagin's People," and the readers look for it every day. And, I might add at this point, if I were using Doonesbury, it would be on the op-ed page. It, in my opinion, is more of a political commentary than a comic strip. I wouldn't be surprised one day to find Trudeau doing a straight political-type cartoon. That seems to be his natural bent.

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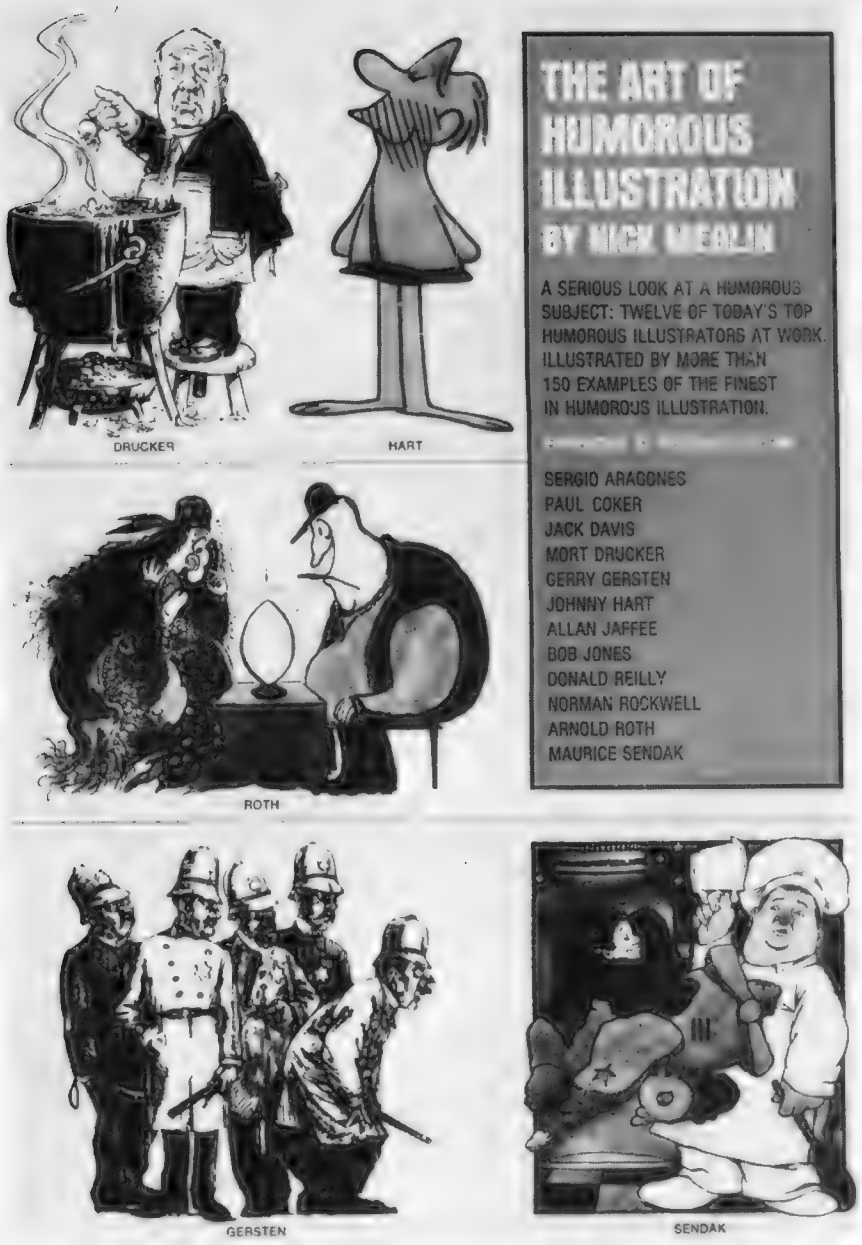
The comics can be, and are, used successfully by many papers to brighten up their classified sections and as a means of drawing the readers into the classified. This is true, too, of the financial pages and could be successful in the women's pages with the right feature . . . I wouldn't float the comics but anchor them in the same spot each day so they can be easily located by the readers.

About make-up:

On the subject of comics pages make-up, many that I see are too crowded, with unimaginative layouts. As many strips as possible are jammed in. You



THE ART OF HUMOROUS ILLUSTRATION

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wonder sometimes who makes up the pages. You wonder if the editors are too busy or don't give a damn about what's on the page until someone screams about the quality or content of the strips and then they take a look. This I find hard to believe because comics are rated so high in all surveys. In many cases, the editors follow the comics so closely they sometimes make it rough on us; but I think that is good, too, because we should know what the reaction is from the field.

As for display of the comics on the page, in addition to using them as big as possible and with as much white space as possible, I think you should have a star system. The new comics should be introduced at the top. The better comics ought to get the better display. I would rotate the comics periodically. I wouldn't change them all the time, maybe every couple of months to give the page a new look. The display would depend on how the other entertainment features on the page were displayed.

The subject of sex in comics is still with us and will be for all time. We certainly have more latitude now than we had years ago, but there is still a line you can't step over. And that's as it should be. Comics cut across all age levels from the tiniest tots to the advanced senior citizens, and their feelings must be respected. Most editors and readers line up squarely against flagrant sex or sex symbols.

When we had "Robin Malone" running, Robin was quite a chesty gal. We had various reactions to Robin, and I remember we had one sequence where she was involved in baseball; and her uniform was a little on the scanty side. We had some comment that we should have a little less sex and a little more baseball. One west coast editor wrote in and suggested if we could get Robin out of some of her clothes and off the baseball field and get her an X-rating, we would have a better comic. So, somewhere in between there, I think, lies the direction we should go.•

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